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PREFACE

The love of adventure, together with that inclination for the sea so characteristic of English youths, led me to try a seafaring life. Feeling assured that my friends would like to know what I did at sea, and what I saw, I kept a diary or "log," in which I entered occurrences, and my impressions. When I returned home after a lengthened voyage, and was persuaded to embrace a less arduous profession ashore, it occurred to me that my notes, shaped into the form of a book, might not prove altogether unpalatable to the general public, whose sympathy and interest have lately been so fervently enlisted in the merchant seaman's cause

by the praiseworthy efforts of Mr Samuel Plimsoll, M.P. In this belief I was further strengthened by the fact, that although numberless works have from time to time appeared about Jack and sea life, they were either the dreams of mere novelists, or else they were written by Navy officers, who, to say nothing of the radical differences between the Royal Navy and the Merchant Service, had little to do with the common sailor beyond ordering him about. Dana's clever and well-known work, 'Two Years Before the Mast,' is, however, a bright exception. He served as a common seaman in the American Merchant Service, and graphically describes the life in the forecastle—"before the mast." I sailed in a British ship, and lived in apprentices' quarters—"abaft the mast."

I encountered the usual difficulties in keeping a log at sea, but managed to weather them one way or another. Sit-

ting on a bucket and writing on one's chest, with the inkstand sliding in the most impossible directions, and the ship rolling in a heavy sea, I found not to be conducive to literary zeal. Once the ink ran short, which necessitated large additions of coffee and water. Then, during the hurricane in the Atlantic on our way home, the seas which poured into the house and floated my chest gave my log such a thorough soaking, that had it not been good paper and well bound, I fear it would have been separated into as many parts as there were leaves.

I have endeavoured to give a true description of a sailor's and apprentice's life aboard ship in the English Merchant Service; and in this attempt, I now offer to the lenient criticisms of the reader, 'Two Years Abaft the Mast.'

F. W. H. S.

LONDON, *September* 1876.

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TWO YEARS ABAFT THE MAST.

CHAPTER I.

OUTWARD BOUND.

On the morning of the 31st October 18—, I passed the London Dock gates on my way to the Sea Queen, lying in the Shadwell Basin, to which ship I had been bound apprentice three or four days previously by the owners, Messrs Gléddall, Nixon, & Co. of Fenchurch Street. She was a fine-looking craft of 724 tons register, clipper-built, and of the highest class at Lloyd's, and was chartered by a well-known firm of London brokers with a general cargo for Sydney. She was fully loaded, with the hatches battened down, only waiting for

high tide at 11.30 A.M. to haul out in the river. My chest and bedding having been brought aboard the day before, I carried nothing but a small black bag, containing a few little things thought of at the eleventh hour. Captain Ferguson, the commander, was a man of experience and ability, having been appointed to the vessel since she was built in 1869. His wife had accompanied him each voyage, and intended doing so again. She was an amiable person; but sailors, even under the best of circumstances, dislike captain's wives aboard, inasmuch as they believe he is frequently deterred from "carrying on" (risking a heavy press of sail in proportion to the wind) by the anxieties of his wife. Mr Brooks, the chief mate, was a kind-hearted fellow, and a good seaman. As for the second mate, Mr Crafton, he professed great friendship towards me, but behaved so inconsistently all the time he was with us, that it would be difficult to say what his character really was. The third mate, Mr Paxton, was a young man of superior education and breeding for his position, and with him I subsequently became very intimate. The

boatswain, Macknight, was a big, square-shouldered man of about forty years of age, always inclined for a joke; but his idea of nationality was so vague, that he alternately proclaimed himself a native of all the English-speaking countries in general, and of Virginia, U.S., in particular; I believe he was an Irishman. The carpenter had been in the ship since she was built, and was a man of medium height, with large bushy whiskers. The steward was a thorough jack-of-all-trades; he had been "before the mast" (common seaman), and a wood-cutter in Canada; could play the fiddle, and had a very good idea of painting. He had tried his hand at most things except the stage, for which he seemed to me best calculated. The cook was a coloured man, with all the originality belonging to his race, and, with the steward, amused the hands upon more than one occasion. The crew consisted of twelve A.B.'s (able-bodied seamen), four ordinary seamen, and three apprentices besides myself — viz., Charles Turner, twenty years of age, who would complete his four years' apprenticeship in nine months, and although very conceited, and at

times tyrannical, he was nevertheless a good seaman, and well up in navigation; Edward M'Ewan, who had previously been to sea for ten months, the son of a captain, and rather short and thick-set; and George Reed, who had been apprenticed when I was. He came from near Cambridge, where his father is a farmer, thereby verifying the old sailor's ditty, "Sell a farm to go to sea," which is considered by them the height of imbecility. Being of a devil-may-care disposition, and aged sixteen, he appeared well cut out for the profession. All the forecastle hands, excepting two, were foreigners, but from having generally served some years in English ships they spoke our language perfectly.

As I stepped down the gangway-ladder, Mr Johnson, the ship's husband, accosted me, and after inquiring whether my chest was aboard, told me to go forward at once to put on my working-clothes. Our berth was in the fore-part of the house, just abaft the foremast, the carpenter's workshop being at the after-end, and the cook's galley in the middle.

There were five bunks in our berth—two on each side and one athwartships, this latter being

Reed's. The third mate had the upper one on the starboard side (right-hand side), and M'Ewan the lower, while Turner and I slept in the upper and lower bunks respectively on the port side (left-hand side). As I opened the door (of which there were two, one on each side), the third mate came up to me, accompanied by the boatswain, and M'Ewan, Turner, and Reed. They said they had been looking for me to join them in a drink, and that I must come and have a "liquor up." I did not want anything to drink by any means, but being assured confidentially by M'Ewan that it was unsailor-like to refuse, I complied. At the public-house we met Mr Crafton, the second mate, who began ordering several bottles of sherry; then the third mate ordered port; and four or five of the hands happening to drop in, they were invited to join the last *good* drink before leaving England. A large quantity of wine and beer was consumed, whilst no small quantity was wasted, being freely tossed about the floor by several, who it is to be charitably hoped were struck with a sense of their intemperance; but if so, they were rather late in their dis-

covery, as they appeared to have lost all idea of centre of gravity, one in particular collapsing between the wooden form and the wall, from whence he made no attempt to extricate himself. However, the time had come when it was necessary to leave, and not a minute too soon, for we found the ship slowly hauling through the dock-gates, in charge of the pilot, thereby giving us some little trouble to get aboard. Being clear of the gates, the steam-tug Victoria took us in tow, and we very soon were gliding down the river, but were signalled to stop to enable Mrs Ferguson to come aboard, the boat which had just put off being some distance behind.

Orders were again given to the tug to proceed as soon as Mrs Ferguson was aboard. The ship's husband and the pilot were on the poop, while the chief mate was on the forecastle head, ready to transmit to the tug the pilot's commands. The hands were all in the forecastle, more or less drunk, and, as is customary going down river, no work was required from them, we apprentices getting what little odd jobs there were to be done about deck. It

has been generally observed that fewer disasters occur to London outward-bound ships when first at sea, whose crews have had time to get sober during the time the ship is being towed down river, than to vessels sailing from Liverpool or such ports where they emerge at once out at sea. Off Blackwall the ship's husband called all hands aft on the quarter-deck, and when those who could walk had mustered before him, he asked each one his name, and then informed us we were bound to a distant port, that our happiness was in our own hands, if we cheerfully obeyed our officers—and when the ship came back he hoped to see the same faces again; and having wished us a prosperous voyage, he stepped down the gangway-ladder into the boat that had brought the powder-chest aboard, which now shoved off. We reached Gravesend at two o'clock, where we moored to a buoy and went to dinner, consisting of steak and potatoes in a "kid" (a small tub, there being one for each mess). I noticed how the others did, and sat on my chest with my tin plate on my knees, waiting for my turn. The third mate helped himself first, and passed

on to the senior apprentice, and so on down to my turn. The first meal at the commencement of a voyage is rather a delicate point aboard a ship, as each one helps himself in rotation according to his seniority, which, when once established, is strictly adhered to at the other meals for the rest of the voyage. The junior apprentice has always to wash up the plates, &c., dirtied by the mess in his watch; but the watches not being yet picked, and consequently no sea laws laid down, they were bundled away in the common locker as they were.

The dinner sobered most of the men to a sufficient extent to enable the chief mate to get the jib-boom rigged out, and clear the decks ready for sea. Towards dusk we knocked off work for the day and had tea (also called at sea "supper"), each one getting a pint in his hook-pot. I found it to be a pale inky fluid, fortunately tasteless, as its flavour might have been as repulsive as its looks. The second mate, for some reason or other, had failed to be aboard when we left London, and was now anxiously looked for by Mr Brooks, as the captain would be aboard by ten o'clock that

night. Our berth was in a confused state owing to the chests not being yet placed or the bedding stowed away in the respective bunks; and there seemed to be a perfect plague of oil-skins, sea-boots, and sou'-westers. At about nine o'clock I turned in, or rather tried to do so, for each time I managed to wriggle head first in, I as regularly wriggled my blankets out; at last I got in tolerably comfortable. The space between the top bunk and mine measured only about one foot and a half, which necessitates a particular way of getting in—namely, sitting on the edge, and then lowering the head, and lifting up the feet, you roll in.

During the night one of the men woke me up, saying it was my watch on deck, and that I had better look alive to give a smart relief. I did not relish this; but having no alternative, I obeyed. Getting on deck, I saw by the cabin clock that it was a few minutes past one; and in answer to my inquiries, the man with whom I kept watch informed me this was called "anchor-watch,"—one man and a boy remaining on deck for one or two hours, and then being relieved by others. It was bitterly cold,

so that I was not sorry when two o'clock came to rouse up Reed and turn in myself.

In the morning we had half a pint of coffee each, already sweetened, but of course without milk; and having to drink it out of a pannikin (a tin mug), the would-be invigorating beverage did not look very inviting. The second mate was aboard, having arrived, it appears, half an hour before the captain. The steam-tug came alongside at 6 A.M., and having unmoored, we proceeded down the river in tow, in charge of the "salt-water pilot," who had replaced the "mud pilot" (so called from only piloting ships between the docks and Gravesend). The weather, although cold, was fine and clear, with a gentle breeze from the S.W. The men were busily employed setting up the head-gear. Reed and I being "first voyagers" (never been to sea before), had of course the brass-work to clean. When off Southend Mr Crafton sent for me in his berth. He told me that it would be safer for me to let him keep my watch and chain; and having had £5 given to me when I left home, he advised me to let him take charge of that also, together with a bottle of brandy I

had packed in my chest. Thanking him, I readily consented, and forthwith delivered all to his care. The tug left us off the Prince's Channel: the ship being under topsails, jib, and foretopmast-staysail. We now began to pitch and roll to an extent that made me feel uncomfortable in the extreme. The sky was overcast with heavy black clouds, and the gentle breeze of the morning had given way to what to me seemed quite a hurricane, a sudden gust sometimes laying the lee bulwarks clean under water. At 5 P.M. we let go the port bower off the North Foreland, and came to anchor, which I afterwards learnt was in consequence of the captain deeming the vessel too crank (bad stowage of cargo, placing the centre of gravity too high) to go to sea.

At 9 P.M. the wind increased in force, with occasional heavy squalls. I turned very sick; and as the seas struck the side of the vessel in rapid succession, the sharp thud momentarily drowning the roar of wind and sea outside, I thought a sailor's life abominable. Reed was as bad as myself, and what with our combined groans and sighs, I fear we did not

make it very pleasant for the other three. Saturday, at five A.M., the wind moderating, we weighed anchor, and proceeded outside of the Goodwins under topsails, jib, and spanker; but all to no purpose, for a sudden squall striking the ship, we were nearly laid on our beam-ends. I was sweeping the quarter-deck at the time, and as she dipped her lee rail under water I instinctively ran up to windward, letting go my broom. Reed was at the same work, and when she righted, Mr Crafton set us both to work again. The vessel was plunging so much that it was an utter impossibility for us to sweep, and at last giving it up in despair, we went below (going to your berth, off duty). In the afternoon we came to anchor once more off Margate, and the captain soon after sent the third mate, Mr Paxton, ashore with a special letter to the owners, intimating that the ship was unfit to proceed to sea.

The next day (Sunday) we weighed anchor and shifted to the Downs. The weather grew again very severe, and riding in an open roadstead, we rolled as badly as ever. I never tasted a drop of the brandy I had intrusted to

the care of Mr Crafton. He told me he had broken the bottle, but I afterwards found out that he drank it himself. Tuesday, at eleven o'clock, the third mate returned aboard, accompanied by Mr H—— (one of the owners), with instructions from the owners to return to Gravesend. We were not a little amused whilst heaving round the windlass at seeing Mr H—— leaning over the bulwarks deplorably sick. Our putting back made the men strike up the well-known homeward-bound "chanty"—

"Good-bye, fare-ye-well;
Good-bye, fare-ye-well!"

The tug Palmerston towed us up to abreast of the Chapman, where we anchored for the night. At eight o'clock we "chalked" for watches, and I turned into my bunk. When anchor-watch is required, the men settle their turns by chalking a circle on a chest, dividing it into as many divisions as there are men, each one putting a mark in his own division; and when they are all filled in, the cook, or some one who did not witness the marks made, is called in to rub them out. The first one wiped off has the first watch—viz., from 8 to 9

P.M.—the second one he chances to fall on has the second watch,—and so on to the last; and if the number of men exceeds the hours of duty, then they begin their turn the following night. It would be difficult for any one who has not been to sea to conceive how disagreeable it is to turn out of a warm bunk to keep an hour or two's dreary watch on deck. A spray invariably breaks over you to begin with; and, if the weather is at all rough, a "green sea" will roll over the bulwarks occasionally, sweeping you mercilessly along the decks. Weighed at five o'clock next morning, and proceeded in tow up the river, arriving at Gravesend at noon. This day last week we had sailed from it apparently bound to Sydney, little thinking we should so soon return. During that time I saw but too plainly what little romance there is about a sailor's life; in fact, the weather was all that was bad during the whole of the time; and if it is unpleasant ashore, it is ten times so afloat.

The following day a lighter came alongside with fifty tons of iron in bars as ballast, and all hands were employed discharging cargo out

of the main hatchway. By Sunday the iron was all stowed snug at the bottom of the hold, and the cargo restowed above. Next morning the Palmerston was once more towing us down. All went well till about off the North Foreland. We had just been sent to dinner, and it was blowing half a gale of wind, when suddenly a hard thump, causing the ship to quiver, startled us all. We rushed on deck, our first impression being she had struck a bank, but the reason was now plain. During a squall the hawser had parted, leaving us totally unprepared for such a contingency; the tug being already away some distance on our port bow. There was no time to lose, as we were fast drifting on a lee shore, with a heavy sea. The topsails were at once loosed and hoisted, and the ship was wore to the north, which enabled us to come to anchor in the evening.

Until Friday the 15th November it blew a continuous gale from the N.E.; however, on this day the wind moderated, and went round to N.N.W., so we weighed anchor and bore down Channel. The wind and sea went down the day after, and on Sunday the sun shone gloriously,

accompanied by a light breeze. To my great satisfaction I washed myself (the first time since leaving Gravesend), and joined the hands who were smoking on the forecastle-head. The weather being so bright, and the Devon coast so beautiful, made me think the life not so bad after all. Everything auguring well, the pilot left us in the afternoon. But such weather in November was too good to last. During the evening the watches were formally picked and set. Picking watches at the beginning of a long voyage is an important act. All hands are mustered on the quarter-deck, the first and second mates each selecting a man alternately. Those chosen by the first mate are in the port watch, while the second mate's are in the starboard; I fell in the latter, together with M'Ewan. Although not the general rule, the third mate was in the starboard watch, and the boatswain in the port. The ship's crew is thus equally divided in two companies, one of which is always on duty for four hours at a time, that being the length of a watch, excepting the "dog watches," from 4 to 6 and 6 to 8 P.M., two hours each, which prevents

the same watch falling to the same men the next day.

Until the last few years it was the custom in nearly all merchant ships to keep the hands on deck and at work throughout the afternoon from 12.30 until sundown; and even sometimes, if there were a heavy press of work, as just before making port, all hands were kept on deck during the day. This was justly considered hard treatment, the men having next to no time for sleep or rest. On these occasions, when both watches remained on deck all day, the division of time was still continued, the wheel being relieved by a man from the proper watch on deck. However, keeping all hands on deck during the day no longer exists in English vessels, excepting after an accident, or in the expectation of one. All hands are still occasionally kept on deck in the afternoon, but this is also being dropped.

When our watch came on deck at midnight the wind had chopped round ahead, and was blowing unpleasantly hard, increasing from hour to hour. Monday morning dawned with a tremendous gale and a mountainous sea,

which tossed us about like a cork, besides continually breaking over us. Our berth was worse than a pig-sty: seas playfully rolled in at the lee door (which had to be kept open for light), and the working of the ship having broken adrift our chests, they lost no opportunity of floating about and knocking each other. At midnight the gale reached its hardest, and, as is usual in such weather, the "well" (the shaft that goes down to the keelson) was sounded every two hours. This is necessary, from the excessive labouring of the vessel opening the seams, and thus producing leakage, which, if not kept under by pumping, is liable to increase to a dangerous extent. It greatly varies, being a maximum in old wooden ships and a minimum in new iron ones.

On Wednesday, the gale continuing with unabated fury, with dense fog and rain, all hands were called in the afternoon to heave the lead. This is a thick bar of lead, enlarging towards the bottom, which is slightly hollow to allow place for tallow or soap, so that the shells or sand at the bottom may adhere to it. By this means, together with the depth of

water, a ship's position may be pretty nearly calculated on reference to the chart. In this case the depth was forty-two fathoms. A ship's reckoning is carried on by two methods; firstly, by solar observation—secondly, by "dead reckoning." The former is the most perfect and correct naturally, and is only supplemented by the latter for checking purposes, or in case the sun is obscured by clouds. The captain navigates by solar observation; the chief mate by "dead reckoning," besides assisting the captain in his department. "Dead reckoning" consists in taking the bearings and distance of a known point ashore before losing sight of land, then taking into account the distance run and course made every twenty-four hours from that date and place. This way, however, being liable to considerable error, as much from leeway as from the impossibility of accurately judging the distance run daily, is never entirely relied upon, but always aided by soundings when near land.

Friday night the gale had increased to a perfect hurricane. At midnight, being our middle watch, I was roused out of a sound sleep, and

had barely awoke when the boatswain, leaning in at the doorway, shouted out, "All hands!" the ship being then under bare poles. The third mate told me, as he went on deck, to "bear a hand" (look sharp). The others had been gone about ten minutes when I got on deck, and not seeing any signs of the men anywhere, I imagined them to be aft on the poop, whither I reluctantly directed my steps, which was a matter of no small difficulty, considering the rolling and total darkness. It was useless to try to detect by sound the whereabouts of the men, as the roar of the wind and waves was, if possible, more than deafening. "Green seas," a massive block of water, as it were, were constantly breaking over the quarter-deck, with the quivering thud so well known to sailors, sweeping the main-deck as they lurched to either side, and drenching me up to the waist as they rolled along. At last, thinking I stood very little chance of ever reaching the poop-ladder, I was deciding to return, when in an instant an unusually heavy sea struck the ship, causing her to lay over so much that I completely lost my balance, and clutching at a cask

just on the move, I went headlong down to leeward, striking with my brow the spar lashed against the bulwarks, and was immediately submerged. Although very giddy, I lost no time in regaining my feet, and having been carried by the water to the quarter-deck, I managed to gain the port cabin door. I threw myself on the chest in Mr Brooks's berth quite exhausted, where I shortly afterwards fainted. Upon recovering my senses, I found Mr Crafton standing by me lighting his pipe, he having carried me to his bunk, oilskins and sea-boots still on. He said he found me lying across the deck in the mate's berth. This was unmistakably a kind act, although at strange variance with certain deeds hereafter. When morning came I was glad to get my eye plastered up, which the steward soon did. The gale, though still raging, had somewhat abated. At noon all hands were called to heave the lead, and bottom was reached in forty fathoms—sand and stones. Shortly afterwards a sea struck the boat on the port davits, seriously damaging the gear. We sounded again at midnight, and found bottom in thirty-eight fathoms.

On Tuesday the weather moderated, but as everything seemed to indicate a return of bad weather, the captain resolved to seek shelter; and accordingly we squared the yards and stood in for Portland, where we came to anchor inside the breakwater at 5 P.M. It was time we got inside, for that night it must have blown a "living gale" outside, judging by the way the masts quivered in the ship. The next day a fine ship, the City of Adelaide, was discovered ashore, a complete wreck, a short distance along the coast, and several lives were lost.

From Monday the 25th November to Monday 2d December we lay windbound. I received numerous letters from home; indeed, one every morning, which I regularly answered. We filled up with water and took aboard some fresh meat; and the wind having hauled round to N.E., with fine and clear weather, we weighed anchor to the tune of the "chanty,"—"I served my time in the Black Ball Line,"—and proceeded out by the west entrance of the breakwater. The weather was beautiful, and seemed to foretell a prosperous voyage at last. The following day the breeze had somewhat in-

creased, but still the weather held fine, and by the evening the anchors were got inboard. I had not been up aloft yet; but in the afternoon, being on the poop, the captain sent me up to the mizzen-top to reeve the port cross-jack leachline through its block. I felt rather uncomfortable up there, and was glad to get down again on deck.

On the 5th the wind shifted round to the west, with squalls, which in the evening increased to a fresh gale. We were now in the Bay of Biscay, which seemed determined not to spare us any more than the English Channel. The sea ran mountains high, at times breaking over the ship in a fearful manner. Day after day rolled by, but still no change. The ship strained heavily, which obliged us to keep the pumps going night and day: no easy task, as the seas often made a clean breach over the vessel. On Tuesday at midnight a lull occurred; and at daybreak of Wednesday, it being our morning watch on deck, the carpenter was in the maintop looking after some repairs there, when, to our bewilderment, he sang out, "Land ho! on lee beam!" The

captain immediately called all hands to wear ship. It was a critical moment; we drifted so fast that the rocks could now be seen from the deck. However, barely had the order been given to put the helm up, than the wind shifted round to N.E. Nothing could have happened more fortunately. The yards were squared; the foresail, the maintop-gallant sail, and outer jib were set, and away we went ploughing, bows under. The coast soon disappeared, but not before it was discovered to be Cape Prior, Portugal. We must have drifted a great distance during the four or five days the captain was unable to obtain an observation; certainly we never reckoned on being near there. In the evening the clouds and mist cleared away, revealing once more a blue sky. The weather gradually became milder as each day saw us further south. It still blew a steady breeze, and we averaged about eight knots an hour, so that in a few days we were glad to take off our pilot-jackets; and soon after our clothing was reduced to dungaree trousers (a thin blue cotton stuff, much worn by sailors) and a flannel shirt. Every one of course went barefooted,

which custom soon produced its fruits, in my case, of numerous bruises and scars. Fortunately this is only for a month or so; after that the skin becomes so thoroughly hardened from knocks and exposure, as to protect the feet almost as well as shoes.

On Sunday the 15th we sighted the group of islands called the Great Desertas. This was indeed a day of rest. The wind still held fair, and was so steady, that the yards required no trimming all day. The forecastle-head and deck presented a curious sight; for, profiting by the warm weather, we turned out all our bedding, boots, and "go-ashore" clothes to dry. My mattress had been wet since we left the Bay of Biscay, which made me appreciate a dry one that night. During the week we were busy rigging out studding-sail booms and setting the sails. When I say "we," I mean the men; we apprentices usually got a job "aft," such as washing the cabin bunk-boards, or scrubbing the cuddy-deck, or else our respective mates' berths. As Reed was one morning dipping a mop overboard, the flannel head suddenly dropped off into the water, much to his confusion. The

boatswain, seeing it floating by, immediately ran to Reed and quickly made him scrape a mark on the bulwarks at the spot where he had lost it, with the nail remaining in the stick, to insure its being found when the ship passed that way again. Reed had a wholesome dread of the boatswain with his rope's-end, and in his bewilderment never gave a thought to what he was being ordered to do. But he was much put out when he discovered he had been made the subject of a joke.

Owing to our long passage so far, the coals ran short, and the captain ordered the anchors to be got out for the purpose of putting into one of the Cape de Verde islands; however, it soon after fell to a dead calm, in the course of which we drifted in sight of the island of Antonio, but it was so misty we could only see a faint outline of it. A breeze at last sprang up, and we signalled the Italian bark Antoinette Castro. The captain took occasion to ask them for half a ton of coals; they replied we could have them if we fetched them. The quarter-boat was soon lowered, and after about an hour's absence returned with the desired

coals, and also several bottles of cordial for our captain, besides eighty cigars apiece to the first and second mates. She was bound from Bremerhaven to Rangoon, and was fifty-two days out. This was the first vessel at sea we had boarded, and I closely watched her various movements as she backed her mainyard to heave to. Objects always appear considerably nearer than they really are when seen at sea; this was very noticeable in the long time the boat took pulling across the apparently short distance. The bark had now trimmed her yards, and was standing away on her course again.

We were now in the N.E. trades, carrying us along at the rate of eight to ten knots an hour. I thought I never should be able to admire to my full satisfaction the supreme beauty of the tropical nights. Above, a star-spangled firmament, glittering, twinkling, and glaring, truly magnificent in its myriads of lights and well-defined constellations. Of the latter the "Southern Cross" shines forth in majestic glory, beautiful in its simplicity—a noble emblem. Below, the deep indigo ocean, hushing its very ripple, that nothing may

disturb the sublime and impressive scene. Around our stern and in the wake, the phosphorescence gambols and plays, as if thankful for the new lease of life given it by our onward progress. All round, the horizon stands boldly out against the sky, the two different shades intensified by contrast. The contemplation of such unlimited grandeur in the heavens, of such boundless waters on all sides murmuring and sighing in a whisper, controlled by some mighty invisible power, excites simultaneously a feeling of awe and sorrow. I would sit for an hour at a time on the bulwarks enraptured with the romantic scene, till the harsh cry, "Trim the binnacle!" or "What's the time?" reminded me that I was aboard the Sea Queen, and that it was our middle watch. I had full leisure to look about during my night watches, as I was the junior apprentice in our watch, and consequently had to look after the time and strike the bell, besides trimming the binnacle-lamp, &c. Yet, notwithstanding I always paid for it dearly, I sometimes risked a nap, with the innocent resolution of waking at the proper minute. Finding the deck rather

hard, I frequently lay on the sails in the sail-locker, which was one of the cabins leading out of the cuddy, and facing the clock, and from whence I have been tugged out by the leg more than once. Mr Crafton allowed me to sit on his chest in his berth when it rained on deck, of which favour I often availed myself, until on one occasion, feeling particularly sleepy, I thought there would be no harm in sitting in his bunk. But I did worse than that, for I fell sound off to sleep in it. A heavy brass-work job the next day was the consequence, which impressed me with the desirability of not incurring such risk again.

Wednesday, the 25th Dec., 18—. *Christmas Day.*—It certainly was not Christmas weather: a scorching sun blazed down upon us from a cloudless sky. Our lat. was 12° 14′ N.; long. 26° 14′ W. The captain held service in the cuddy, after which we made a very passable dinner, extra rations having been served out to us by the captain's orders, consisting of preserved meat, ditto potatoes, and plum-pudding, and half a pint of beer each; but the heat was unbearable throughout the day. When

our watch came on deck that night at 12 o'clock, Mr Crafton called me on the poop and gave me a large piece of cake and a glass of beer; but where he procured either from I thought it best not to inquire—certainly he was a strange fellow; rather hard upon me at times, no doubt, and yet frequently kind in other ways. In a few days we entered the "doldrums." In these regions, extending from lat. 5° N. to 5° S., it almost perpetually rains, without a breath of air stirring; and when a light breeze does spring up, which enables the ship to make a little way, it shifts to all points of the compass with such rapidity as to try all tempers aboard. Instances have occurred when vessels have been detained for weeks in these seas becalmed. On Friday it rained a regular downpour, with lightning at intervals. We made the best of it, for we all stripped and had a thorough wash from top to toe. To a landsman the scene must have appeared ludicrous enough, seeing the extraordinary activity suddenly displayed in cleaning ourselves and our clothing. All the water-casks were filled up in a very short time.

Monday saw us cross the Line in long. 28° 13′ W., and well I remember the day. I was informed at noon that during the dog-watch, from 6 to 8 P.M., I should, together with Reed and Bury, one of the ordinary seamen, be initiated into the mysteries of Neptune. At the appointed time Reed and myself were conducted on deck; as for Bury, he ran up the rigging, and notwithstanding every effort was made to catch him, he managed to escape the ordeal. I was first. I was made to sit upon a board placed across the wash-deck tub, which was full of water, and the men being all now assembled around the main hatch on which the tub was placed, the steward, personating Neptune, opened a book, and began asking me a few questions, such as, Why did you come to sea? Did you never cross the Line before? Where do you live? &c. As I opened my mouth in answer to the last question, the boatswain from behind endeavoured to empty the contents of a bottle down my throat; but I managed to clench my teeth in time, and so far avoided a beverage which, judging by its nauseous smell, had been obtained from the

pens of the live-stock. My chin was next noticed as being unbecomingly smooth, and as they said the only remedy consisted of tarring and scraping, it was accordingly prescribed. Having only a pair of duck trousers on, they tarred me from the head to the waist, whereupon one of them attempted to scrape my face with part of a rusty hoop. However, what with the tar in my eyes, and somehow or other no longer relishing the fun, I strongly resisted, and the consequence was, Neptune ordered me to be formally baptised. The words were barely out of his mouth, when suddenly the board was jerked away, causing me to plunge backwards into the water. I thought this indeed unpleasant, the more so as I never expected it. After struggling a good deal I scrambled out, and amidst the general laughter and applause I ran along the deck to clean myself. I commenced rubbing myself over with oil, which soon turned the tar a grass green. I used about half a pint of lamp-oil, but as Reed and I had the cleaning and filling of the ship's lamps, which necessitated the feeder being kept in our berth, we were not on ration. Reed was served

the same way, and came below about half an hour afterwards.

1*st January* 18—, *New-Year's Day.*—The captain gave us a holiday, but no extra food, which marred the day, as sailors don't much care to be jolly on an empty stomach. During the night watches Mr Crafton at times took me up aloft, sometimes as high as the mizzen cross-trees, showing me the way to climb, and cautioning me against trusting to the ratlins instead of the shrouds. Our coals again ran short; and so low had they got that the carpenter had received orders three or four days previously to cut down the main skysail-mast, which, like a good many spars and booms, went to feed the galley-fire. On Thursday the 9th we sighted and boarded a bark called the Annie, from London to Brisbane, thirty-eight days out, from whom we obtained half a ton of coals. Rather a curious meeting took place on this occasion. M'Ewan, one of our boat's crew, recognised his brother as their second mate, he being up to that time entirely ignorant of his whereabouts. We were now in lat. 27° 34' S., and the sun nearly vertical. One afternoon,

during a dead calm, I could not resist the temptation for a bathe, and was soon after followed by Mr Paxton, the third mate; but the captain ordered us inboard again on account of the sharks. We remained in sight of the Annie above a week. Being in lat. 38° S. we had lost the S.E. trades, which as a rule are seldom experienced beyond 30° S.

On Tuesday the 21st the wind veered round to the southward, soon after increasing to a strong gale; but it abated the next morning. Thursday the 23d we spoke the ship Prince Charlie, Liverpool to Aden, seventy-two days out; and the next day the Lady Palmerston, Liverpool to Bombay, fifty-three days out. Ever since the ship left Portland Mr Crafton and Mr Paxton had been on bad terms with one another. It is not customary for the second and third mates to be in the same watch. The first mate and third mate invariably command the port watch, whereas the second mate and boatswain take the other. I don't know how they came to be so placed—whether it was the captain's orders or their own choosing—but it certainly was the cause of

several disputes, the following amongst them. Coming down Channel Mr Crafton always had Mr Paxton on the poop with him for the sake of company. They were pretty good friends then, so Mr Paxton very readily took his post beside the second mate during the night watches, which to a certain extent was a favour on his part, since third mates never take regular charge of a watch, being only required to keep themselves handy in any part of the ship they choose, which would not be the poop by any means. After a time Mr Crafton used to ask Mr Paxton to keep watch whilst he went below to fill his pipe. This became quite regular as we entered the tropics; so that at four bells, when the log is hove, and which is the third mate's duty, Mr Crafton would vanish below, not to return for sometimes more than an hour, Mr Paxton having naturally meanwhile to walk the poop. This he finally refused to do—hence continual quarrels. One night, somewhere about the meridian of the Cape of Good Hope, it was our middle watch on deck (*i.e.*, 12 to 4 A.M.), and as usual we relieved the port watch at midnight. A stiff gale was blow-

ing from the S.E., the ship being braced sharp up on the starboard tack under upper topsails; and as the sea increased she commenced diving bows under, therefore Mr Crafton ordered the fore and mizzen upper topsails to be stowed. It was cold and wet aloft, so that when Mr Paxton got down on deck again he may very possibly not have been in the best of humours (third mates always lend a hand aloft). As usual after taking in or setting sail, he saw that all the ropes were coiled up forward. When he went aft, Mr Crafton inquired if the ropes were all clear; and upon Mr Paxton answering rather sharply in the affirmative, he assured him he was a liar. High words ensued, in which Mr Crafton greatly excelled in thorough coarseness. As this took place on the quarter-deck, just outside the captain's cabin, he came out to ascertain the cause. But Mr Crafton continued using such strong language that the captain caught him round the waist, and lifting him off the deck, carried him into his berth, where he locked him in. He sincerely apologised the following morning to the

captain, who allowed him to resume his duties, though not before he had "logged" both him and Mr Paxton ("to log" means entering a person's name in the official log-book for insubordination, &c., for punishment by the authorities ashore); but he subsequently forgave them. A little incident like this serves to vary the otherwise monotonous routine of a sea-life, particularly as it affords a topic of conversation for days after.

The weather was now dull and cold, with frequent rain, our lat. being 41° S., which is necessary to catch the prevailing westerly winds for ships running down their "eastings." Large numbers of whales were often to be seen playing about. It is curious what a quantity of work there is always to be done aboard ship. Three or four of the best men are continually busy repairing the rigging and chafing-gear, while others are variously employed about the decks, "seizing" blocks, putting new strands in ropes, &c. The apprentices have generally to fetch and hold the tar and grease pots and marline-spikes for the men at work; not at all

an unpleasant task in fine weather up on a top-gallant-yard out of the mate's way, although a knowledge of the art of holding on by one's eyelids is oftentimes desirable.

Then the masts want scraping and greasing; the ironwork wants beating and painting; and "sennit" and "foxes" are in perpetual demand.

CHAPTER II.

ROUTINE ON BOARD SHIP.

It may prove interesting to say a few words about the ordinary routine at sea aboard a merchant-ship. I will begin at mid-day, being the hour at which a new sea-day commences. Supposing our watch was then below, we come on deck at 12 o'clock (eight bells) to relieve the port watch, who then go to dinner. A watch is composed of an officer (first or second mate, as the case may be), and of a gang of men under his command. It is the officer's duty to see that the work is carried on properly, and he must also occasionally look after the steering, and carefully notice the shifting of the wind, as well as the approach of a squall, or of anything likely to endanger the ship. Then comes

the helmsman, who receives his orders from the man he relieves, who is bound to keep the ship as close to her course as the wind will allow,—as, for instance, when close-hauled; the rest of the men being scattered about to different jobs. I, being the junior apprentice in the watch, had to look after the time and strike the bells. Consequently, at half past 12 I strike one bell, at 1 o'clock two bells, at 1.30 three bells, and so on. At four bells the wheel is relieved. The relief always goes below ten minutes or so before his time comes to take the wheel, for the purpose of cleaning himself somewhat, and also getting a smoke. Captains are very particular about the helmsman being cleaner than when at his ordinary work, partly on account of the wheel being located on the poop, which may be termed captain's quarters. If, during a strong breeze, a royal or a topgallant sail has to be clewed up and furled, the men leave whatever work they are engaged upon at the time, and at once proceed to execute the orders received from the officer of the watch. In bad weather, of course, no work

is carried on, the crew's whole attention being occupied in watching the orders for setting or taking in sail, trimming the yards, &c.; besides the impossibility of working at any fixed job when big seas are sweeping the decks. At 4 o'clock (eight bells) the port watch are called, and directly the wheel is relieved we go below. I used generally then to have a smoke and a read, either in my bunk or on the forecastle-head, according to the weather, until 5 o'clock (two bells), tea-time. A pint of so-called tea and junk, or salt pork, formed this meal. But we used frequently to make dishes more palatable out of the pork or beef. I always enjoyed the mixture called "scouse," which is made by chopping up some meat in a "kid," mixing this with powdered biscuit, water, and "slush" (grease from off the salt meat), then baking the lot in the oven for a couple of hours. Another favourite dish with sailors is "dandy-funk." This is made with powdered biscuit, molasses, water, and slush. "Dogsbody" is made with pea-soup, powdered biscuit, and slush, and is a very favourite dish, on account of the little trouble

it gives compared with the others. If the weather was fine, we usually took our tea on the forecastle-head.

At 6 o'clock (four bells) the other watch come below again, and have their tea. From 4 to 6 P.M., and 6 to 8 P.M., no regular work is done, these hours forming the first and second dog-watches respectively. No play is allowed to the watch on deck from 4 to 6 P.M.—not even after 5 o'clock, when the decks are cleared up and swept; but from 6 to 8 P.M. skylarking of the roughest description is freely allowed by the captain. Some would play at cards, others sing, spin yarns, or read books. We had great fun sometimes with the cook, which consisted in endeavouring to turn him out of his galley, he meanwhile defending himself with scalding water. A rat-hunt was in high favour at this time of day, as we then madly chased him along the deck under the spars, each one being armed with a belaying-pin; but the cook was always leader, as, with his can of scalding water, he repeatedly drove him out from a place of retreat. Eight bells are struck (8 o'clock), and with it suddenly cease the boisterous shouts.

Our watch now go below to sleep. The others sit on the forecastle-head, or walk the deck in couples, smoking or talking, whilst a few lie down for a short nap. No singing or loud laughing is now to be heard. The man on the "look-out" walks the forecastle-head with measured tread; the cook puts his galley square and locks the doors, and all hands become aware that the sea-night has begun. The captain generally had a quiet conversation with the officer of the watch for an hour or a couple of hours, and retired to his cabin about 9.30 or 10 o'clock. At midnight we relieve the port watch. When relieving the night watches, all hands have to muster aft on the quarter-deck; the mate in charge then sings out, "Relieve the 'wheel' and 'look-out,'" and the watch go below. In fine weather, as in the tropics, for instance, these four hours invariably pass quickly, no doubt because every one turns out sleepy, and continues to remain in that state more or less until turning in again. It would be impossible to overrate the melancholy beauty of the sea during a "middle watch" in the tropics, and it is considerably enhanced by the half-dreamy

state one is in. The soft breeze just filling the sails, the gentle and hardly perceptible motion of the vessel, as it is quietly ushered along over the varying waves—everything seems to harmonise with the condition of those aboard. At 4 o'clock we go below, relieved again by the port watch. The cook, who turns in every night at 8 o'clock, is called at 4 o'clock, the steward at 5 o'clock: the former at once lights the galley-fire to prepare the men's coffee for half-past 5; the latter takes his pot forward, waiting for hot water for the mate's coffee. From half-past 5 to 6 the men have their coffee and a smoke before turning to, which time in fine weather is duly announced by the order of "Brooms and buckets aft," for the purpose of washing decks. Two hands draw water, the boys pass the water along to the mate, who heaves it along the deck whilst the rest are employed sweeping and scrubbing. At seven bells—viz., twenty minutes past 7 o'clock, the watch below are called to get their breakfast before relieving those on deck at 8 o'clock. The captain used generally to come on deck about 6 A.M., have a look at the compass, then

the sails, and would then fetch a book from his cabin and read, sitting in his favourite arm-chair on the poop.

I have now concluded the description of the daily routine in fine weather; but of course things are much altered in bad weather. On Saturday afternoons, two hours (viz., from 10 to 12 to one watch, and 12 to 2 to the other) are given for washing clothes; and at 4.30 or 5 o'clock the stores for the week are served out—that is to say, one pound of sugar per man (less two oz. deducted for lime-juice), and half a pint of vinegar—one man from each watch collecting the week's rations for his mess.

The captain has supreme authority aboard: even to regulating the hours of work and rest. His word is law: to refuse obedience is mutiny. He can order a man to be put in irons at any moment of the day or night. Yet, notwithstanding this power, it is very seldom that events demand its enforcement—English seamen being as law-abiding as their compatriots ashore. And if of late the public has been startled by two fearful mutinies, following close one on the other, in British ships, it is no small

consolation to know that in the one case the crew were all foreigners, and that in the other the English portion of the crew not only refused to join the mutineers in their murderous deeds, but in time overpowered them, and succeeded in bringing the vessel home to a British port. In justice to one or two nations, it is but fair that I should state that the foreigners in question were the lowest of foreign seamen—namely, Turks, Greeks, Italians, and Spaniards. These unfortunate sailors not only seem to entirely lack all sense of honour and justice, but are utterly wanting in the true estimation of that brightest of jewels, "British fair-play." Most foreign seamen use their knives where Englishmen would use their fists, a cowardly practice that cannot be sufficiently condemned.

The sole command in the navigation and working of the ship rests with the captain. When he is on deck, the weather side of the poop belongs solely to him; the officer of the watch steps over on the lee side. He instructs him as to the course, and gives him the general directions, and at the end of each watch he marks on a slate the distance

run and the course made. The officer of the watch is free, by his own judgment, to take in royals or topgallant sails, but nothing beyond. In reefing topsails or furling a course the authority comes from the captain alone. In wearing, tacking, and in other "all hands" work, the captain commands aft, the chief mate superintends forward, and the second mate in the waist. In the ordinary daily work the captain does not superintend personally, but instructs the chief mate, who sees that the work is carried on properly. If the captain should find fault with the way any man may be doing his work, he never addresses him personally, but through the officer of the watch.

The chief mate is the superintending officer, and is known aboard ship as "the mate" *par excellence.* His duties are very important. In taking in cargo he must give an acknowledgment, called the "mate's receipt," for all goods stowed in the hold, and for deficiencies in these he is answerable. When the ship is in port, the chief mate commands much more than at sea, the captain being the greater part of the time away ashore seeing merchants, shippers, &c. Before

leaving the ship in the morning he mentions to the mate the work he would like carried on during the day, who superintends its execution. At sea or in port he never goes aloft, neither does he put his hand to any work, excepting when he chooses to give a haul on a rope. In washing the decks, and otherwise cleaning the ship, which is the first job in the morning, each mate, when at sea, takes charge of it in his watch respectively, as they alternately have the morning watch (4 to 8 o'clock); but in port the second mate alone oversees the washing down, heaving the water along the deck himself. It is the chief mate's duty to keep the "log-book"—an exceedingly responsible trust. At the end of each watch the officer enters upon the "log-slate," usually placed in the chief mate's berth, the courses, distance run, winds, and any particular matter of interest. From this slate, every twenty-four hours, the chief mate copies into the "official log-book," after submitting it to the captain, who seldom makes an alteration.

A tale is told of a Yankee mate who one day caught a shark, which had the good fortune

to slip off the hook while being hauled on deck, and effected its escape. He entered in his "log," "caught a shark and lost it;" determined that though the monster of the deep might weather the hook, it should not escape his log.

The mates are always addressed by the captain and crew with "Mr" prefixed to the surname, and are answered with "Sir;" an omission in doing so would, if intentional, be against the rules of the service, and would lead to difficulties.

It is commonly said at sea that a man still keeps his tarry hands by becoming second mate; but in reality this saying applies more to former days, when he was often picked out from the crew by the captain, and expected to do about the same work. Now, although he lends a hand here and there at some little job, yet he would not dip his hands in a tar-pot, unless specially ordered to do so by the captain or chief mate; showing that although his duty, as well as any other, the practice has died out. In furling a sail the second mate goes aloft with the watch to the courses and topsails, but no higher. His proper place, as leading man, is the "bunt" in

furling, and the weather earing in reefing, but he is not entitled to either by virtue of his office; and if a seaman shows greater strength or skill, it is no breach of discipline for him to take them from the second mate. He usually has charge of all the boating in the harbour, such as taking the captain ashore, or fetching things off; or at sea, where a boat is lowered, in boarding another ship.

The third mate commands no watch, but assists the chief mate in his. Like the chief and second mates, he takes no wheel, and, besides going aloft to a topsail, he will lend a hand to a top-gallant sail or jib. He has charge of the stores, which would otherwise devolve upon the second mate, and sees that they are properly served out. In some ships, however, the steward controls the provisions of the ship.

The average allowance in merchant-ships to each man or boy is 1½ lb. of beef, or 1¼ lb. of pork, besides about ¾ lb. of flour with the beef, and a full supply of pea-soup with the latter. The quantity is sufficient; it is the quality that lacks. Three quarts of water are also allowed to each man per day. But ships vary a great

deal as much in the quality as the quantity of food they serve out. This depends upon the class of owners, the captain, steward, and even cook. Some ships regularly provide pickles or butter; others preserved vegetables and tinned meats twice a-week; whilst a few do not even allow tinned meat on Sundays. But taken in the aggregate, sailors' food is miserably bad. The flour is always more or less musty and sour, and even sometimes so full of weevils as to have quite a grey colour.

A certain ship's crew had not enough to eat, at which they grew intensely dissatisfied; and well they might, for, as the yarn goes, they had only three sweet-potatoes and a smell of putrid junk each per day. At last they went aft in a body and complained to the captain of the steward's meanness, who, having patiently listened to their protest of hunger, said to the steward, in a passionate fit of generosity, "Give 'em another half-'spud' and burst 'em."

The office of third mate is generally an unpleasant one; dispensing the stores is alone sufficient to make it so — the men always growling at the quantity as well as the qual-

ity. He works about deck the same as the other seamen. If he is smart at his work the mate gives him some fancy job on the rigging or elsewhere; indeed it is necessary that he should be, as he is supposed to be the leader of the watch, and for this reason, as much as his comparative youth, some men show a jealous feeling. Besides, the third mate is usually berthed forward with the apprentices, with whom he messes. As the men come into the house and smoke and yarn when they choose, whether the third mate is there or not, he, for the sake of keeping on good terms, is obliged to be to some extent familiar, but yet, to keep in favour with the mates and captain aft, must "keep up his position," so that he is rather delicately placed. It is the third mate's duty to walk the poop, or otherwise look after the ship's safety, while the officer of the watch is below getting his meals.

A boatswain is, as a rule, only carried in large ships. His sole duty is to look after the rigging, taking charge of everything that concerns it, such as blocks, clip-hooks, paints, marline-spikes, serving-mallets, &c., &c., besides ratlin-stuff,

small ropes, sennit, foxes, spun-yarn, and spare chafing-gear. He remains on deck all day, and turns in all night; but, like the carpenter, cook, and steward, is liable to be called on deck whenever all hands are required. He takes no wheel nor look-out.

The carpenter is the most independent man in the ship. No one has authority over him but the captain, the mates giving him no orders whatever; he familiarly goes by the name of "chips." From about half-past 6 till 5 are supposed to be his hours, during which hours he can "take it easy" if he feels so disposed. People unacquainted with the sea are apt to believe that sailors have but little to do on the briny deep, and the carpenter still less. They would be a little surprised if they saw the quantity of chips and shavings daily blowing about the deck, and heard the continual sawing, knocking, and planing. Many a time, in sweeping the decks of an evening, have I wished the carpenter anything but a long and happy life, as the wind scattered his shavings and sawdust right and left, in bold defiance of my repeated attempts at sweeping them along. I

have wondered where he gets all his work from, but he is certainly always busy. A part of the house is usually allotted to him as his workshop. The carpenter, like the third mate, is sometimes berthed forward and sometimes aft, in which case he would either live with the apprentices in the deck-house, or else with the steward aft, as ours did; either way, he does not mess aft in the cabin, but with us. Our "chips," however, was allowed by the captain to carry his grub to the steward's berth, where he ate it alone; consequently he lived entirely aft. He has charge of the pumps, the windlass, the donkey-engine, if there is one, and, besides looking after the hull and fittings on deck, is answerable for the condition of the masts and yards.

A sailmaker is not carried in every vessel, but when he is, he also is a sort of independent man. The reason that a sailmaker is not always shipped is, that most able seamen are fully capable of performing the work. Sailmaking and mending afford constant employment throughout a voyage to at least two men in an average-size ship. They usually work on the poop, where the deck stands less chance of getting

wetted. When a sailmaker is carried, he lives with the boatswain in a berth partitioned o from the forecastle.

The steward, who is known as the "flunkey," is generally looked down upon by the forecastle hands on account of his many menial and effeminate duties, which are particularly noticeable if the captain has his wife aboard. Although the pay is higher than for an A.B., it is but very seldom that a seaman will take the billet, notwithstanding the many luxuries this post offers. He has not the same objection to becoming cook. The steward takes charge of all the stores for the cabin, excepting those of a bulky nature which cannot be stowed in the pantry. He is, properly speaking, the captain's servant. His position towards the chief mate is somewhat undefined; but, at any rate, although he waits upon him when at table, and brings him his tea at 6 o'clock, the chief mate would never think of ordering him to do anything, especially as, living so near together—either adjoining or facing—they are much on a common footing when he is off duty. In working ship the steward attends the main

sheet, just as the cook attends the fore; nevertheless there is sometimes a sad difficulty in getting either to lend a hand, as they ingeniously contrive at that moment to be unusually busy about something or other. Whenever the steward, cook, carpenter, or sailmaker are engaged with the hands reefing, furling, or working ship, they must obey the mate's commands the same as the seamen.

The cook, who readily answers to the name of "slushy" or "doctor," generally lives in the forecastle. He turns out at 4 A.M., as the morning watch comes on deck, and goes below at 8 P.M. The galley is situated in the house, and all the ship's provisions are cooked there. In it the cook exercises the most autocratic authority; many will allow no one inside but the steward, to whom he is bound to give way. A good cook is at once somebody aboard; a bad one would be glad to be considered nobody. Poor "doctor" not unfrequently comes in for a "sailor's blessing" (a growl) rather unjustly, on matters concerning the quality of the food, with which, of course, he has nothing to do. Nevertheless it behoves one not to be

too hasty in making complaint, as he has several ways of paying the fellows out. The law is satisfied with ruder cooking and dishing-up than Jack is. He is required to be scrupulously clean, and in well-regulated ships, after the decks are washed down, he must place his "kids" and pans in a line on deck for the inspection of the officer of the watch. He is occasionally asked to lend a hand to the watch when necessary. Manning the halyards in setting a topgallant sail, the officer of the watch will go to the galley-door: "Now, then, doctor, put a few pounds of beef on this rope!" This is brought out more in the form of a request, as the cook is not bound legally to do ship's work unless he also ships as able seaman. Our coloured doctor, Millington, could never make the seven days' rations of tea or coffee last more than six; but this difficulty he cleverly surmounted by boiling their respective bags on the last day, the difference of flavour not being perceptible. If "chummy" with the steward, the latter brings him for'ard every evening in the "dog-basket" such snacks and scraps as have come off the cabin table.

The doctor occupies the best bunk in the forecastle; indeed he frequently shares with the boatswain a berth to himself, and so gives proof of his higher social standing. By the side is his chest, on which, after the day's work is over at 8 o'clock, he indulges in a lounge, clay pipe in mouth, entertaining the watch below with some interesting yarn. Everybody listens and laughs, or laughs without listening, until the men turn in, and by their snoring stop his yarn. Cooks like to dress as much unlike sailors as possible. Our West India Millington, notwithstanding his black shiny face, cultivated a trim moustache and a bushy pair of whiskers worthy of a military officer; and in his dandy trousers, black frock-coat, tall well-brushed hat and patent-leather boots, veritably appeared a perfect swell, disdaining to mention anything connected with his seafaring culinary profession. The marvel is how he can boil, roast, or fry the crew's meals with the scanty utensils and cramped room at his command. A land cook would literally go out of his mind at the sight of the place, even when in dock, with the appliances in good order, and the ship

steady, let alone when the ship is pitching and rolling, sending every article spinning and sliding with a confused sense of their respective equilibrium, and when the draught, with a persistence only too British, obstinately refuses to blow any other way but down the funnel. The doctor is a suspicious customer—he is bound to be such. Having the cooking of the cabin meals, and consequently a tolerable quantity of "small stores" about, he has ever to be on the look-out against the hungry and not too particular wolves prowling along the deck. A little packet of black pepper, a dash of mustard at the bottom of a bottle, or the remains of a full pickle-bottle, vanish in the most unaccountable way, much to the doctor's vexation, who "knowed it was one of dem fellers," but who is puzzled to pick out the particular culprit. The apprentices are bigger sinners than the men; one is generally ready to go into the galley at one door as the doctor makes his exit by the other, whether it be in search of water or stores. So he keeps the galley jealously closed against all, excepting a favoured two or three, who return his trusting friendship

with the most flagrant ingratitude. But sailors are proverbially hungry, and the stomach is a powerful foe to contend with. Outside the galley-door in fine weather, in the morning, may be seen the doctor sitting on a bucket, peeling the English "spuds" for the cabin dinner, with his inevitable black clay pipe (he is lord of his galley, and can smoke whenever he chooses), looking round for some one to talk to. At 6 o'clock, during the second dog-watch, he takes his well-sweetened tea and dainties, consisting of remains from the captain's table, on to the fore hatch, laughing and joking with his brother salts. It is painful to one's self, on a dark stormy night, to see him put out his light and lock his doors at 8 o'clock, and hurry to the forecastle to turn in, to remain undisturbed by wind or weather all night. Then it is that he is looked up to as quite a superior person, above the laws of ship routine. He generally has little to do in the afternoon, and occupies the time in reading or mending clothes; but as Captain Ferguson indulged in late dinners, poor Millington had his hands pretty full all day; and it was terrible to hear

him curse at his trampled rights by day, and comical in the extreme to hear him regularly disown his daily oaths, when reading the Bible in his bunk of a night.

An ordinary ship's crew may be divided into three classes: able seamen, ordinary seamen, and boys, which latter term signifies any seafaring novice, irrespective of age or size. Each man, when he ships, rates himself, influenced by nothing but his own conscience, or rather reason. And yet with all this freedom it is a rarity for any to take advantage of the licence by fraudulently shipping a higher rate for higher pay. It should also be said, that if found out after clearing out from port—and they are certain to be so—they find no sympathy fore or aft. It is not only deceiving the captain and officers, but also, and even more so, the men, who find their number, already small enough, reduced by one, and further burdened with his share of work. So well are the consequences understood, that sailors prefer underrating themselves, rather than stand the risk of incurring them.

As regards captains and mates, they are

obliged to pass a government examination, and are granted certificates of competency if successful. A second mate, apart from his professional knowledge, must have been four years at sea before he is entitled to go up; a chief mate five years; and a captain six years. The examination consists of navigation proper, and seamanship: for the latter a model ship is used, on which the would-be officer executes whatever is required of him by the examiner. He sends down or crosses royal and top-gallant yards, braces the yards up on the port or starboard tack, heaves-to or tacks ship. After becoming master it is still possible to obtain a higher rank,—extra-master if possessed of higher qualifications: but this degree is not habitually sought after.

But with the common sailor nothing of the sort takes place; in fact it would be impracticable. Formerly, a sailor in want of a ship came to the docks, where he made his choice, much to the advantage of both himself and the captain. Now, he is required to present himself at the Mercantile Marine Shipping Office, where he joins a ship that lies half a mile, perhaps

three miles off, and which he has never seen. A captain comes down with his chief officer. They select their number of men from amongst the crowd standing outside the office, who are then brought before the shipping-master, by whose side the captain takes a seat, while the "articles" are read to the crew "in a loud voice," which they are afterwards compelled to sign, giving at the same time their name, residence, and place of birth. Coloured seamen, maybe a shade darker than ebony, have a noted partiality for Edinburgh as a birthplace. If, just before the articles are read, another man is wanting, the chief mate will go to the doorway. "Now, lads, an A.B. (or ordinary seaman) wanted for a New Zealand voyage; easy ship!" which call is generally answered.

It is customary to sign articles for a voyage out and home not exceeding three years. When signing his name, he is asked whether he wishes for any advance, to which he replies in the affirmative, and gets one month's wages in the shape of an "advance note" representing value only after the ship has sailed; but which he gets discounted at usurious rates. If joining a ship

through the Shipping Office breeds ultimate dissatisfaction aboard, the advance-note system is answerable for half the casualties and crimes leaving the docks prior to sailing. Thanks to it, whole crews are carried aboard dead drunk, who show their first signs of life by rioting, and sometimes mutiny.* As for the plea that a sailor requires his advance-note to buy clothing with, it is a fallacy. A respectable seaman, when paid off from a voyage of average duration, has more than enough not only to renew his outfit, but to spend a few comfortable weeks ashore. Besides this, some put by regularly their savings, of which a tidy balance very often remains after settling for the above. One of our A.B.'s, Phillips, a little coloured seaman, had thus accumulated £60 in the London Savings Bank. An able seaman must be equal to any ordinary emergency aboard ship. He is expected to be able to hand, reef, and steer, and do work upon the rigging neatly. By the term, "a good seaman," sailors mean a smart hand at working on the rigging.

* But—

"There's a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft,
To keep watch for the life of '*drunk*' Jack."

There is a vast difference between the merchant sailor and his fellow "salt," the man-o'-war's man, whom they call "Johnny Haultaut" or "John o' Fight." They hold each other in mutual derision, although without any unfriendly feeling. At one time the Royal Navy was manned exclusively from the merchant service; but the supply not keeping pace with the demand—lessening every year—the navy took to providing its own men, by entering them, when boys, in training-ships, and so rearing them up. To meet the requirements of the service, three thousand lads are wanted annually. Very few men now volunteer from the merchant service. Accustomed to the comparative independence and free life of a merchant vessel, they look with scorn on the binding discipline and severe penalties of a man-o'-war. Merchant Jack laughs with contempt as he watches their crew in uniform dress, walking round the windlass, weighing anchor like mechanical dummies. No hearty "chanties" there—no fine chorus ringing with feeling and sentiment, brought out with a sort of despairing wildness, which so often strikes neighbouring

landsfolk with the deepest emotion. He likes to growl—and he may, so long as he goes about his work. I have heard mates say—Give me a man that can growl: the more he growls, the more he works. Silence reigns supreme aboard a Queen's ship; no general order is given by word of mouth—the boatswain's whistle takes its place.

It should be understood that the merchant sailor holds his liberty at some considerable sacrifice. As a rule, he is worse fed and lodged than an average dog. A shipwreck is a rarity in the navy, but of daily occurrence in the merchant service. If he survives in the former, the Government allows him the greater part of the value of his lost chest and clothing; in the latter, he loses all that goes down in the ship. The State also allows her seamen many other advantages.

Since the introduction of steam, there has been a large proportion of foreigners in the English merchant service — mostly Germans, Swedes, Dutchmen, and Russian Fins. All foreigners are called "Dutchmen" at sea. However, those who sail out of England on long

voyages, have mostly been so long in our service, that practically they are Englishmen, knowing our "chanties" and sea-rules better than their own. People wonder why so many seamen never return to their native parts to revisit their relations. The reason is simple enough in many instances: captains will not ship a man who hails from the port to which the ship is bound, because he is pretty sure to run away when he gets there. Phillips, our little negro seaman before mentioned, once told me that, after being absent from his native place—St Vincent, West Indies—for fifteen years, he succeeded by some stratagem in shipping aboard a schooner bound there. At last, after a lengthened passage, they arrived, but came to anchor at a distance from the shore, where they discharged cargo in boats. The captain, who suspected his intention, kept a keen watch over him; but nevertheless he was able to send a message ashore to his father and mother, both of whom, he was informed, were still living, although a little way up the country. They had done discharging, had finished loading and were weighing anchor, when a boat

hauled alongside, containing his father, mother, and friends. They remained with him until the land was nearly lost sight of, when they returned to their boat and sailed back. Ten years had since elapsed without his returning, and he supposed he never should again.

Ordinary seamen are those who have not the experience qualifying them as A.B. The third of a crew is generally formed of ordinary seamen. They are expected to hand, reef, and steer, and do small repairs on the rigging. The ordinary seamen in each watch take turn about in fetching the food from the galley to the forecastle, washing up the plates, returning the kid, and cleaning out the forecastle; they also help the apprentices to sweep up the decks of an evening.

I now come to that part of a ship's crew to which I belonged, and which is more closely connected with the contents of these pages—the apprentices. Since the repeal of the Act of Parliament compelling regular apprenticeship, an idea prevails ashore that they are no more carried. This is a mistake. Almost all "blue-water" ships carry them, but drawn from a different class to that which furnished them before

the repeal of the Act. Formerly, apprenticeship was forced upon all lads going to sea indiscriminately, varying from a term of five to seven years; now, the "privilege" is reserved for those whose parents can afford a premium ranging from thirty guineas to sixty guineas, and even more, for a term of four years. The whole thing is a farce. The only advantage—if so it can be called—gained, is living apart from the crew. Directly he steps aboard his ship, he is a "boy," no matter what his age may be, for four years, and he must do "boy's" work—an unhappy disappointment to many a genteel youth fresh from the outfitter's, in his dark-blue suit and gilt buttons, not forgetting the badge on the cap, "brass bound and copper-fastened," as sailors say. Of course this lion's skin is soon "doused" and packed away in his chest, being replaced by those articles for which he was the least thankful at the outfitter's—a coarse woollen singlet, ditto shirt, blue serge pants and "jumper," and Scotch cap. His first job is invariably to sweep up the mud on deck and shovel it overboard. An exception, however, should be made as regards Green's

service, once the finest line sailing out of England. In this line the premium is the highest, being £60 the first year, additional payments for the other three years, and £10 per voyage mess-money. Green's ships are frigate-built, and so well manned and found that many shippers and passengers give them the preference over the more modern sharp clippers, and even steamers. They now trade to Australia and China only, their East India trade having been destroyed by the number of steamers. The youths live aft, and are not required to do any menial work; they must, however, lend a hand at reefing, furling, loosing sail, and hauling on the ropes.

Some of the Scotch lines take apprentices (Scotch) without any premium. Whether with premium or not, it makes no difference in the treatment of the lad—all the most menial duties fall to him. If living with the third mate or carpenter, they stand a better chance of fair play; but if living alone, as they sometimes do, they are apt to be cheated out of their full allowance of grub. No third mate or steward would venture to try this game with a foremast

man, because he has the forecastle at his back. But the apprentices have neither that sympathy nor the mate's; each side suspects them of carrying yarns to the other. The men bear them a jealous feeling because of their habitual privilege of going aft when they choose during their watch below; and they are sure of a "work-up job," should the mates see them coming out of the forecastle. One of the apprentices' duties is furling the royals and the light staysails. Should an ordinary seaman happen to be nearer the weather rigging after hauling up the clews, he would very likely make the first move, although not strictly his duty when boys are at hand. If a man or boy is noticed to "hang back" in going aloft, he is very soon reproached with his laziness. The first time I was sent up to furl the mizzen-royal, one evening during the second dog-watch, I felt rather shaky. I had never been higher than the cross-trees before; and when at last I reached the "Jacob's ladder," and climbed it, swinging from side to side as the ship rolled, I thought I should have dropped with giddiness. I dreaded looking down or

looking up; and as I knew the captain was watching me from the deck, I was all the more nervous. Reaching the yard, I cast adrift the weather gasket from the tie, and laying out a bit, took three or four turns with it round the weather yard-arm, and having done the same to leeward, commenced hauling up the bunt—a little operation that occupied nearly half an hour. What with slipping on the foot-rope and missing my footing, clutching at this and hanging on to that, I felt greatly relieved when I got on deck again.

Apprentices also have to clean all the lamps aboard, and trim them every day: the side-lights (when used) being a particularly dirty job. It is common when a young apprentice in brass buttons sallies through "sailor town," for scornful "shellbacks" to sing out at him, "Light the binnacle!" because of his always being called on at sea to trim that most necessary of all lights at night; excepting when there is only one apprentice in each watch, and he happens to be at the wheel, then an ordinary seaman has to do it. The steward generally provides a box of matches once a fortnight to the junior ap-

prentice in each watch for this purpose; but as matches are valuable at sea, he appropriates the larger portion to his own purposes, making the remainder spin out as best he can, by splitting them, and lighting from the house lamp when possible. No distinction is made aboard ship between an apprentice and a forecastle boy: their duties are identical, and their food the same—the latter would learn his profession quicker, being continually with the men. The only difficulty with a lad who first goes to sea in a forecastle, is his getting out of it. Although perhaps with a good education, if not very steady, he finds his ambition of rising, by the influence of his shipmates, soon die out.

CHAPTER III.

SYDNEY.

On the 1st February we boarded the Prince Charlie for more coals, as we were again unaccountably short. It was a lovely day, with only enough wind to fill the sails; but towards evening a strong breeze sprang up, and at 8 o'clock things looked so threatening that all hands were called to shorten sail. No cry is more abhorred than that of "all hands," especially at night. Turning out of a warm bunk from a sound sleep, getting sea-boots on, hastening on deck where all is hurry and confusion, scrambling up aloft with the roar of the wind and rain through the rigging, the shouts of the men, the flapping of the sails as the halyards and sheets are let go, and the drenching spray;

all this can only be realised by a sailor. The weather was very variable—sometimes a calm, at others blowing a gale (which is called here a "southerly buster"), accompanied by a dense fog. Very little work can be done in these seas —viz., the Southern Ocean—on account of the unsettled state of the weather. There is one job, though, that sailors seldom fail to get when nothing else can be done, and that is "holystoning" decks. It is for the purpose of removing the greyish-white colour off the decks, caused by salt-water deposits. However, it does not do to repeat the operation too often, as it makes the wood very porous. The men have to kneel down, and push backwards and forwards a good-sized stone (usually sandstone), the planks being previously wetted and sprinkled with sand. From the fact of kneeling to it, this unpleasant task is known at sea under the title of "saying prayers." Refractory crews generally have this ordered them as a "work-up job."

Monday, 10th February, we experienced a strong gale from the N.W., and a heavy sea soon sprang up, sweeping at intervals across the main-deck with great force. In this kind of weather

"life lines" are stretched fore and aft, otherwise the men could never walk the decks. A dog in his kennel might well be envied when one's clothes are all dripping wet, and the food only half cooked, because of the seas putting the galley-fire out. Clothes cannot be washed, and but barely mended. Oilskins are of no account when a ship rolls heavy seas over her; indeed a downpour of rain alone is sufficient, with a great many suits, to wet them through and through—such wretched material do they supply to poor Jack. The same may be said with regard to "sea-boots," for sea-boots they undoubtedly are, inasmuch as many act in the water much after the fashion of a sponge.

The first Australian sea-birds were sighted on the 9th March, together with the land — viz., Cape Otway—and a welcome sight they were to us. The next day several brigs and schooners hove in view. These parts abound with a peculiar fish called *barracoutas*, of a delicious flavour, and so easily caught, that in half an hour, with only three lines, enough were taken for breakfast for all hands; and well we enjoyed them, after three months of salt beef (other-

wise salt horse) and rancid pork. The land would sometimes be only a few miles off; but occasionally it almost faded out of sight, according to the irregularity of the coast. A fine steady breeze now favoured us with a speed of ten knots or more. We lost sight of land for a couple of days, until entering Bass Strait; with the wind still fair, we gradually shaped our course up the east coast. Nothing could have gone better so far: fine weather, a steady breeze, a full moon by night, and everybody in high spirits at the prospect of soon getting into Sydney harbour; another day's run and we shall be lying snugly at anchor, and "all night in." However, the wind and then the weather turned against us. When off Cape Howe the breeze suddenly died away, to our great disappointment; and by the time we had reached Cape Jervis a dead calm set in. For three long days and nights, there we lay, with not a breath of air stirring, not so much as a catspaw to trouble the glassy surface of the sea. The title of "silent as death" might well be applied in such a case as this, particularly at night. Not the faintest sound is to be heard then; one's own

breathing seems painfully loud. The man at the wheel can hear the watch below laughing in the forecastle, and the footsteps of the "look-out" on the forecastle-head. During the day it was a busy scene; paint-pots and paint-brushes were everywhere, as ships are generally cleaned and painted before getting into port; but this undertaking had been delayed hitherto, in our case, by the strong winds and consequent sprays. Masts, scuppers, bulwarks, panels of the house, were all being scrubbed and coated. All hands were ordered on deck during the whole of the latter two days, for the purpose of finishing sooner. Jack can growl when he likes, which is pretty often; but he has a cause for growling upon an occasion like this which can hardly be denied. The heat was barely short of suffocating us; and considering we were upon an allowance of one pint of water a-day to each man, for drinking, cooking, and washing purposes, it cannot be wondered at. A large whale, during the morning of the second day, was seen playing within thirty yards of the ship, throwing up jets of water with a noise similar to that produced by blowing through an empty pipe. He

continued there about a quarter of an hour, when suddenly, diving his head down perpendicularly, he disappeared.

Towards evening of the third night the horizon gradually vanished behind a thick haze, heavy black clouds meanwhile rising overhead: still not a breath of wind to fill the sails, which had now been hanging helplessly down the masts for three days. This mist and threatening sky augured well, for they were undoubted signs of a change. Towards midnight a heavy thunderstorm burst over us with great fury, followed by torrents of rain descending perpendicularly, there being not a breath of air moving. This lasted until five o'clock next morning, when a breeze sprang up—first ahead, but subsequently a fair wind—which during the afternoon nearly died away again, our speed being about five knots.

It was rumoured during the first dog-watch that the Sydney Heads Light might very possibly be sighted before night; in this hope most of the hands remained on the forecastle-head anxiously looking out. At about seven o'clock the long-expected light was seen, much to our

gratification. At eight bells, the distance could not have been more than twenty miles, and the watch (starboard) were allowed to go below until wanted. Reed half-pulled me from my bunk at four bells, arousing me out of a heavy sleep; he was all excitement, as a large steamer would soon pass us, judging from her lights ahead. I got on deck just in time to see her pass, but I did not think the sight counterbalanced my discomfort in turning out. I again rolled into my bunk and soon dropped off asleep. At eleven o'clock we were called on deck to stand by for orders. The "Heads" now were less than a mile off, and their outline stood boldly out from the bright moonlit sky. The pilot-boat could be seen pulling towards us with their light burning; and the mainyard being backed, they were soon alongside. The pilot was a thick-set man of medium height, who at once ordered the mainyard to be squared. Four or five Kanakas (South Sea Islanders) who had charge of his boat, lent us a hand at pulling on the ropes. We glided slowly along, wafted by so little wind that the sails were scarcely filled. I was enraptured with the scene: the full moon,

calm sea, and apparently overhanging coast, with the surrounding stillness only broken by the distant roar of the sea on the beach, quite made me wonder whether it was a dream or reality. But I did not know then that it was only the beginning of a series of enchanting panoramas, each surpassing one another in loveliness.

At midnight exactly, we passed in between the Heads, and the royals being clewed up, I sprang up to stow the main. A rather curious bet had been made between Mr Paxton and Mr Crafton six weeks previous to our arrival here, as to what would be the date of our arriving at Sydney. One side bet it would be before the 15th March, the other that it would be after. We passed the Heads (the entrance to Sydney harbour) exactly at midnight of the 15th of that month; thus meeting both wagers halfway. What happy feelings come over one when gliding into port after a long dreary passage of several months! The air is perfumed with the odour of forest-wood, the trees and shrubs can be seen on the hilly banks by the dim cold light of the moon, ever varying in aspect as we proceed onwards almost imperceptibly, for the

top-gallant-sails and staysails are furled to deaden her way for letting go the anchor. The carpenter stands by the cat-head with his sledge-hammer, and the word being given by the pilot, down comes the iron mallet with a long sweep, away flies the bolt, and the anchor drops with its ponderous weight into the water, dragging the cable after it at a furious rate, until the required number of fathoms are out, when the compressor is put down. Topsails, courses and jibs were then furled; and by four o'clock, having each had a quarter of a pint of coffee, we turned in until morning.

We were called at eight o'clock to make fast to the steam-tug and to heave up the anchor. M'Ewan, who had just gone out on deck, came speedily below again, calling out to me to come and see the wonderful harbour. I went outside, and never shall I forget the sight. It is said at sea that a sailor is never impressed again to the same extent in visiting a foreign port as he is when arriving out for the first time. That may be; but nevertheless the harbour of Sydney, I believe, is unequalled either for size or beauty. The general effect is indescribable,

especially in the morning, as it was then, when the sun seems to shine so fresh upon everything. Hills of various sizes and gradients surrounded us upon all sides, covered with what appeared to me thick acacia-trees, the green expanse being occasionally broken by a huge black rock projecting. In some places the wood had been entirely removed to make way for a pretty white suburban mansion, with a fine lawn and garden stretching down to the water's edge. Numerous vessels were passing in different directions: smart little brigs and schooners bound along the coast, steam colliers from Newcastle, N.S.W.; and being Sunday morning, several tidy little yachts merrily ploughed along the water, relieving their lucky owners for the time being from the daily toil and worry of business life. In the distance could be seen the church steeples of Sydney, but with such clear outlines that they appeared much nearer than in reality, for there is here no true English mist or fog to obscure the sight and deaden the spirits.

As soon as the anchor was clear of the bottom, we proceeded to the anchorage called "Pinch Gut," where it was let go again. Boat

after boat now boarded us; some for our washing, others as *providorés*, or marine outfitters. Then came the doctor and the customs, each in their turn inquiring for the captain, who, upon such an occasion, is literally required everywhere at once. The water-boat, meanwhile, came alongside, and commenced refilling our tanks. At length the post-boat arrived from shore with our letters; and what excitement and what suspense marked their delivery to their respective owners. Those who were fortunate enough to receive any sat down in some out-of-the-way corner, there to read and think over them undisturbed. I received six—viz., three from home, one from a friend in Paris, and two from city friends. As for some newspapers and almanacs which had been sent me—of course I never had them. It is a fact, although rather hard to believe by people ashore, that Jack, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, never has his newspapers, nor printed matter of any description (if open) delivered to him. I am told that the Colonial P.O. clerks keep them for their own reading. Fresh beef and potatoes replaced the "salt beef." No one can doubt its salt reality;

but as to its being beef, I certainly do doubt that. What it is I would not venture even to suggest; at all events, I have heard it pronounced to be "old horse," "hippopotamus," "mahogany-wood," "junk," "compressed rope-yarns," besides many other names, which I do not call to mind for the moment. During the afternoon some of the men amused themselves fishing over the side.

Having read over my letters again for the third or fourth time, I took my pipe on the forecastle-head to enjoy a quiet smoke. The view across the harbour was magnificent,—fairy-land itself. To our left could be seen the "Domain" (Sydney's Hyde Park—a perfect Elysium of beauty) sloping down to the water, with numbers of people passing to and fro under the shade of the trees. The general aspect was overpowering to my former idea of beauty. We lay here two days, during which time we shipped and rigged out the gangway-ladder, and did various other little jobs about deck, such as usually present themselves going into port. Whilst heaving up anchor prior to the tug towing us to the wharf, we had some good "chanties"

—for Jack's spirits are at their highest at the thoughts of a run ashore. The "chanty" known under the name of "The Rio Grande" is particularly pretty, the chorus being:—

"Heave away, my bonny boys, we are all bound to Rio.
Ho! and heigho!
Come fare ye well, my pretty young girl,
For we're bound to the Rio Grande."

The name of the wharf was Parbury's. Directly we got safely moored the hatches were unbattened, and the "lumpers" (men employed at the loading and unloading of ships), set to work. We were visited at breakfast in our mess by a half-starved-looking individual in rags, who came begging for some biscuit. He said that he had been an apprentice in the Queen of the Age, a well-known liner; but he ran away to the diggings, where he never did any good. For a wonder, this day the sky was dull and overcast; very different to the previous day (17th March, St Patrick's Day), when the sunlight was reflected by a thousand radiant colours, composing the dresses of the many that turned out to celebrate the occasion.

Having a letter of introduction to some folks living in Balmain, on the other side of the harbour, I availed myself of it one evening by paying them a visit. I was very kindly received, and was told to come again on the Sunday for the purpose of looking over the repairing-dock for iron ships, the largest, I was informed, in Australia, their son being connected with it. The suburb called Balmain is really very pretty. Imagine Brixton with its smooth roads and neat houses, and the front gardens thickly planted with trees and plants both English and tropical, large banana-leaves overhanging the roadway—and a good idea may then be formed of what it is like; only that Balmain is very hilly, affording splendid views of the harbour from some of its heights.

I picked up with a good many apprentices from different ships then in port: the Coleroon, Shahpore, Ann Duthie, Duke of Abercorn, and joined them in several "larks." I met a young solicitor at the parlour of a refreshment bar in George Street, one evening, who invited me, together with five others, to dinner at his house the following night: the arrange-

ment being, that we were to meet him at seven o'clock at the same place. Accordingly we met punctual to the time as desired, but the gentleman not turning up, four of the number went elsewhere. But a friend and myself resolved upon going to his house at all events, as I had obtained his address. It was a long walk to Wooloomooloo, but we succeeded at last in finding the house. The gentleman had forgotten all about his promise, but nevertheless stood us a good supper. After this I visited him several times; for it does not take long, I noticed, to pick up friends in Sydney.

Sydney is a far more imposing sight when viewed from a distance than at close quarters. The streets are mostly narrow, and the architecture of the houses, as a rule, is plain, without the least pretension to beauty. They are nearly all built of bricks in the usual London style. Exception, however, must be made for the new post-office, a stately building of stone, with red granite pillars, erected in George Street, but not then quite completed. There were two theatres, the Victoria and the Theatre Royal. I witnessed at the former The "Pris-

oner of Love," its sensational character being seemingly well appreciated by a demonstrative audience. At the latter place the performance consisted of gymnastic feats by intelligent dogs, who already knew too well the absurdity of their position to execute any of their master's commands—and two monkeys, described on the programme as tight-rope dancers. They would walk with a balancing-pole half-way across, then, letting go the pole, to the great enjoyment of all but their master, they would continue to the end, their hands and feet holding on under the rope in their more natural way. This was very laughable, and quite out of keeping with their showy dress. Between these performances several songs were given, one relating to a Sydney "trap" (policeman) being loudly encored.

One Saturday night I joined a party of about twenty apprentices (*alias* middies ashore), bent upon being jolly. We proceeded to "The Queen's Head" in Pitt Street, where drink soon circulated pretty freely. Several songs were sung; but in consequence of one of the number dancing a double-shuffle on a highly-pol-

ished mahogany table, the landlady bade the cheery lot "clear out." At this they arranged to go to the "Scandinavian," a music-hall, the time being about 12 P.M. The manager very politely inquired whether we would favour the audience with a song, which we readily agreed to; and, mounting the stage, we achieved a great success. Some apparently had got so used to the sea-roll, that they signally failed in their repeated attempts to stand up on *terra firma*. The following day, Sunday, walking out in the afternoon with the same company, a gentleman accosted us, and stood us all round a refreshing glass of brandy and raspberry. Coming out, we were met by another person, also a perfect stranger, who, without any advances on our side, repeated the liberal act, much to our amusement and satisfaction. It should be said that both individuals were, nautically speaking, "half-seas over," more or less. I am convinced that the Sydney people are a queer set. Food is amazingly cheap, especially oysters, compared with London prices. A large basin of stewed oysters, with bread and butter *ad libitum*, may be obtained for 6d. or 8d. How-

ever, they are smaller, without any of that delicateness of flavour usually associated with that size in England.

Government House stands in the "Domain" before alluded to. This park is magnificent as much in its site and general laying out as on account of the lovely views across the harbour on one side, and over Wooloomooloo on the other, which can be obtained from the elevated positions. But it is at sunset that the scene is most beautiful. Turner himself could not be more lavish in gorgeous colouring than is Nature at this time: the sky, the trees, the water, all appear dazzling in gold and red. The very birds, insects, and grasshoppers, seem to wish to participate in the glorious effect, judging by their increasing hum and noise. As the sun slowly vanishes away, the perspective becomes blue and purple, the sky settles into a bright greenish hue, and the noise and flutter cease, to be replaced by an almost unbroken silence, made all the more noticeable by its suddenness. The plaintive notes of a distant sailor's "chanty" or call alone break upon one's ear at intervals; and sweetly pretty they

sound, particularly at such a time and place. A very favourite evening promenade is the "Lover's Walks;" long and stately avenues of trees, affording a delightful spot for a moonlight stroll.

Captains invariably give their crews a day's liberty at each port they make any stay at; and I was glad to have a day to myself, as upon other occasions we did not "knock off" work until half-past five or six o'clock in the evening. Dressed in my brass buttons and cap with badge I stepped ashore at nine o'clock in the morning, and having purchased some cigars, I started off for the ferry-wharf, near the end of King Street, in order to take the steamer to Parramatta, a trip that had been recommended to me because of its charming scenery. The river-steamers which ply between Sydney and that place are small vessels of about seventy tons, and work upon the high-pressure principle, Yankee fashion. The distance between the two places is about seventeen miles on the so-called Parramatta river, but which is really only a prolonged inlet of the great Sydney harbour, the water being salt

all the way. The day was splendid, not a cloud in the sky. As we proceeded on our journey panorama after panorama displayed itself, each of the most exquisite loveliness. At intervals of four to six miles we stopped at roughly-constructed piers made from wood growing in the surrounding bush. The banks are as varied in their picturesque wildness as they are beautiful. At one time a pretty country residence would appear in sight, followed by dense woods, which in their turn would be succeeded by steep rocky hills covered with pines and thick bushes.

After an hour's journey we arrived at the navigable limit of the river, so quitting the steamer I took a seat on the omnibus which runs the remaining distance, a matter of six miles or thereabouts. Forest enveloped us on all sides, and strangely out of place did the four-horse omnibus appear thus amongst the trees, with no road to travel upon save that marked out by the impressions of its wheels, causing frequent and terrific ruts, and proportionate shocks to the nervous system. Emerging into a road, the country became more open;

pretty little English-looking cottages adorning the road at intervals, surrounded by orange-trees, vines, bananas, besides many other plants I did not know the names of. Parramatta is a small country town with nothing notable in itself, but is remarkable for some splendid orange-groves and vineyards surrounding it, as likewise for its jail, an imposing group of buildings only recently constructed. There is literally nothing to do in the place in the shape of amusement; so getting on the omnibus again I soon found myself aboard the steamer, which shortly afterwards proceeded Sydney-wards, where we arrived safely by five o'clock.

I went one Sunday morning to St James's Church, the most fashionable in the town, the service being in every respect similar to that at home, and the congregation the same class of people.

We were called at half-past five and commenced work at six every morning, Sundays excepted. Washing decks fore and aft began each day. After dinner we usually had a bathe alongside the wharf. Sydney is a noted place for that particular kind of sandstone known at

sea as holystone, and ships always replenish their store here. One day we pulled across the harbour under Mr Crafton to pick up as much as we could. It was a very heavy job, as the blocks, which were as much as I could lift, lay some distance up the beach. There is one great thing in being in port, you get good food, and invariably in abundance, which was certainly the case with us—so much so, that quantities of good meat were wasted daily, as it only costs here from 2d. to 4d. per pound. The captain and his wife were absent from the ship some four or five days, having gone on a visit in the country. Washing is very dear; the charge is 3d. apiece, and is done partly by convicts; by which one might infer that the task is not generally liked.

CHAPTER IV.

COASTING IN AUSTRALIA.

AFTER discharging our general London cargo, we took in some 400 tons of coal as ballast, for Newcastle, N.S.W., distant about sixty miles up the coast, whither we were bound. I narrowly escaped being left behind. Mr Brooks had given me leave of absence early in the morning until one o'clock, and off I sauntered to the Domain, to have a last look round at the stately scenery before leaving the place, which we expected to do the next day. Happily, being without my watch, and thinking my time nearly up, I returned to the wharf considerably before one o'clock, and found the ship hauling away to the anchorage, having just time to leap aboard. But Jack never

knows until the last moment where he is bound, nor when he may sail. Captains keep this information well to themselves, their only confidants being sometimes the chief and second mates, who, when questioned on the subject by the men, generally evade giving an answer. We left two hands behind, the boatswain and an able seaman, both having obtained their discharges from the captain.

We dropped anchor on the Wooloomooloo side of the harbour, waiting for the tug which was to tow us out of port and up the coast. At 9 P.M., as she did not arrive, we were told to turn in, but to be ready for a call at any moment. In obedience to the cry of the chief mate, "Man the windlass!" we tumbled on deck at 2 A.M. and found the tug alongside. It happened at the same time that another ship, some distance across the water, was weighing anchor, the men singing some very pretty "chanties," the effect of which was strikingly beautiful in the still night, combined with the going "clink" of the palls as they repeatedly dropped. Meanwhile we steadily walked round and round our windlass, and by break of day we slowly

wended our way out to sea. We had been in Sydney a little over a fortnight, and I felt quite sorry at leaving the charming place so soon. The Rhine, Switzerland, the Lake of Como, are magnificent in their way; but as they are totally distinct from each other in type and in character, so they differ from Sydney harbour. By four o'clock in the morning of the 3d of April we passed outside the Sydney Heads, but with a little mishap, as the tug had gone on one side of the lighthouse and we on the other, being carried away by some current, which necessitated their cutting the hawser, and, to prevent our drifting ashore, we had to let go the anchor. We swung so rapidly that the cable parted, and had it not been for the timely arrival of the tug we should have gone ashore. The weather was rather squally, but we loosed the three topsails, which aided the tug considerably. The coast is principally of red sandstone, and generally presented a wild and rocky front, although relieved occasionally by patches of wood and bush.

We did not reach Newcastle until five o'clock.

The first impression the place made upon me was anything but favourable. A small dirty town, or rather village, built on a steep hill, with a frontage on the river of wooden wharves, with coal-shoots everywhere; and along the quays trucks and waggons, all laden with coal, convinced me of its practical business-like calling. The river Hunter here is half as wide again as the Thames at Gravesend, and a great deal of money has been spent in clearing its entrance of sandbanks. We took up our moorings some distance above the town, where we remained a fortnight awaiting orders from our agents for loading. The beach was covered with oysters, and we several times brought some aboard; but in consequence of their unfortunate habit of clinging to large lumps of stone, and their obstinate adherence thereto, we never could bring many at a time.

On the Sunday following our arrival I went ashore with Reed. Finding we could not reach the town from where we had landed on account of some intervening pools and ditches, we directed our steps the opposite way, towards some woods; but our progress was again barred

by what appeared this time an insurmountable obstacle—a lagoon, fully a quarter of a mile wide, of black liquid mud lay stretched out before us. In strong contrast small clumps of vegetation (evergreen appearance), some distance apart, stood cheerfully out from the surrounding murkiness. We had no other choice than to take off our shoes and socks and wade in up to the knees, and occasionally deeper. When we reached the other side, an old man living in a hut close by, and who had been watching and directing us, showed us a spring where we succeeded, after a fashion, in cleaning ourselves. This we innocently thought to be the end of our troubles; however, it had been decided otherwise. Having at last entered the wood, we were so unmercifully attacked by mosquitoes, which came swarming wherever we went, that we made a hasty retreat, and espying a sort of breakwater, we emerged there—which, although a longer distance to the ship, saved us the return journey as we came.

An unusual occurrence happened here in our three mates leaving the ship. The captain and Mr Brooks did not agree concerning several

matters, therefore they parted. Mr Paxton, who was close friends with the chief mate, and quite the contrary with Mr Crafton and the senior apprentice, then applied for his discharge, which the captain accorded him. But, shortly after discharging the chief and third mates, in consequence of misconduct he was compelled to dismiss Mr Crafton, who, having drawn all his pay, had not a farthing to take but 10s., which the captain gave him out of his pocket. I had received from Mr Crafton whilst in Sydney 27s. out of my £5, leaving a balance of £3, 13s., which I have never received, but which he nevertheless promised to remit me to Hong Kong, where we were bound. The captain returned to Sydney to engage new officers and two seamen to replace those left behind there, which he succeeded in doing.

The first Sunday after being alongside the wharf, I attended service at Christ Church "cathedral"—a small country-looking church, built romantically upon the top of some high cliffs overlooking the sea. The coast is very rocky here; and the roar of the sea, as it frantically dashed itself into spray below, combined

with the church music, which was exceedingly pretty, made the service very impressive. Our steward also left us, being determined, as he said, "to knock off the sea." He afterwards obtained a situation as cook in the principal hotel of the town. We were all sorry at his going, as he was such a comical fellow, so full of wit and humour.

Working in coal all day, and stifling with coal-dust, we earnestly longed for the day when the ship would be at sea again. Sailors have a most wholesome dislike to the loading and unloading of coal. This is but natural, seeing its grimy influence upon everything, and considering that sailors as a class are essentially clean in their habits. It is not in every port that the men are required to trim the coal or unload it—as, for instance, in China or India, where native labour is cheap. But whether working at it or not, the ship is smothered fore and aft with the dust. Everything seems to turn black—bedding, bunks, food, clothing, and even the inside of one's sea-chest.

Heavy rains now began to fall at intervals—the month of April bordering on the Australian

winter season. At length our good ship being fully loaded, we cast away from our moorings one fine morning and dropped anchor in the middle of the stream. At the eleventh hour two ordinary seamen, bright articles, who had been engaged to replace others, and who had both got drunk upon their advance and refused to sail, were brought down aboard by the police from the police station, where they had passed the night in safe custody. They were put down in the lazarite until the ship hauled out into the stream, and I was placed over the hatchway to look after them, which was the source of much laughter afterwards. We only waited for our anchor, lost coming out of Sydney harbour, but which had been fished up and was on its way here, arriving on the 22d.

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CHAPTER V.

FROM AUSTRALIA TO CHINA.

THE following day, 23d April 1873, early in the morning, we weighed anchor, and with royals loosed we stood out to sea, bound to Hong Kong. There had been many changes in the ship's company since we first touched the Australian coast two months back. Our new chief mate, Mr Alton, rather above the medium height, with thick moustache and whiskers, had a Yankee twang about his talk which helped to make him a good deal disliked at first; but the real reason was, I think, that when he gave an order he insisted upon its being executed. However, we soon found out our mistake, and he subsequently became a general favourite. Mr Mason, second mate, a Scotchman, was a big

square-shouldered man, with black bushy beard. His strong *penchant* for *aqua vitæ* and other mild fluids got him into sad trouble upon more than one occasion. He had once been a captain, but had ruined himself by drink. The boatswain and third mate were not replaced—the senior apprentice, Chas. Turner, being made acting third mate.

We were glad to get to sea again; for much as Jack looks forward to reaching port, he soon gets tired of the irregular hours and work beside, the customary routine of his salt-water life. A stiff breeze sprang up after clearing the coast; and under a press of sail, driving us along at the rate of eight knots, we soon lost sight of land. During the afternoon all hands were mustered on the quarter-deck, and watches were repicked—I again falling into the second mate's. The first few days we encountered an unusually heavy sea, considering the wind, causing us to ship large quantities of water as we rolled from side to side with square yards. The watch had a good laugh at my expense one afternoon. I had to get a bucket of salt water; and as the ship was roll-

ing most unmercifully, I did not deem it prudent nor pleasant to draw it from over the bulwarks, so had recourse to the more convenient way of stooping with the bucket on one side in the lee-scuppers, waiting for the water to rise through the scupper-hole as she rolled over: but as ill-luck would have it, she suddenly lurched so much, that the bulwarks were completely buried in the sea, and of course myself likewise. After being washed across the quarter-deck, struggling, swimming, and gasping, the water subsided, which enabled me to regain my footing.

We sighted New Caledonia at daybreak of the 30th, and on the 1st of May entered the tropics, and soon found ourselves among the flying-fish, which are only to be met within the tropical limits. On a fine day hundreds can be seen leaping out of the water and flying away, frightened by the approach of the ship. They seldom rise to a greater height than three or four feet from the water. The only means of catching them is to entice them to fly aboard by holding a lantern over the bulwarks at night-time, which, however, is seldom successful.

Saturday, 3d May, our lat. was 20° S., long. 163° E., with all sail set and a fair steady breeze. The heat became very oppressive by night as well as by day—most of us sleeping on the forecastle-head for the sake of coolness. Tuesday, the 6th May, we sighted the islands composing the Solomon group. During the day the breeze died away, leaving us becalmed; and as evening approached, lightning was visible around the horizon. At 10 P.M. a strong wind sprang up, which soon increased to a moderate gale, lasting, from the time we shortened sail to when sail was made again, nearly two days. It is invariably a rule that when passing islands at sea, particularly in the tropics, one encounters squalls and gales. Fortunately they clear up as suddenly as they begin; for on the Thursday morning the sun rose in all his heat and glory, with just enough breeze to fill the sails. The captain, following his reckoning, sent me up on the foretop-gallant-yard to look out for land; and towards 1 P.M. an island was observed on the port bow (Stewart's Island, Solomon group), and the breeze being light, the captain gave orders to bear down upon it. We might

have been about eight or nine miles distant, and the island bearing on our port beam, when two objects were seen on the water a long way off, which Mr Alton, by the aid of the ship's glasses, discovered to be two canoes pulling vigorously towards us, and with sails set to catch what little wind there now was. We backed our mainyard to give them time to come up. I watched them with all the eagerness of one who had read of wild Indians and South Sea Islanders, but who, hopeless of witnessing the extraordinary customs and sights narrated, had closely associated them with the mythical. When near enough to make themselves heard, they shouted in broken English for a rope's end, gesticulating franticly whilst getting alongside. The canoes were apparently dug out of a solid trunk, with a stout plank of wood running parallel with and at a distance of 12 to 14 feet from the keel, and which is connected with the canoe by half-a-dozen bamboo stems. The great value of this outrigger consists in its affording the means of counteracting the pressure on the sails—the occupants of the canoe having merely to lie out and come in on the outrigger as the

breeze increases and diminishes; so that where a European boat would perhaps be under reefed canvas, these native craft not only would have theirs set, but would sail along as upright as in a calm.

There were about half-a-dozen men in each, whose only covering consisted of a cape reaching down to the elbows, and a cotton band three inches deep round the hips. Their skin was a dark olive-brown, highly tattooed, but their height and proportions were very much those of a European. Their hair, jet black, long, and frizzy, was brushed out all over, as nearly as possible at right angles with the roots, making their heads appear an enormous size. They sprang up over the bulwarks like cats, and two or three stopping to shake hands with Mr Alton, they scampered on to the poop and surrounded the captain, to whom they endeavoured to show their good friendship by making horrible grimaces and talking broken English. They brought cocoa-nuts, sea-shells, native fruits, and palm-oil for barter, wanting above all things, in exchange, tobacco and matches. We did a rare trade with them. I

gave one fellow a clay-pipe, three boxes of Bryant & May's safety matches, and my hair-comb, for two bags of sea-shells and his hat—a round conical concern made out of palm-leaves, which took my fancy, but with which he was exceedingly loath to part. I was shortly afterwards greatly amused by his coming back saying the matches were no good, a fact he proceeded to demonstrate by striking several impatiently against the side of my bunk; but he went away quite satisfied when I had pointed out to him their peculiarity. All business transactions over, the captain bade them depart, which they did after bidding us good-bye in such affectionate terms as made us all laugh heartily. We squared our mainyard again and proceeded on our course before a gentle breeze, which barely filled the sails and only rippled the water. It was indeed the Pacific Ocean. I watched the two canoes disappearing away on their destination —an island clad in all the luxury of nature, made more beautiful still by the glowing tints of the setting sun. One is prompted to believe that peace and happiness must reign in such a Garden of Eden. And yet some of the most

atrocious murders are sometimes committed on Europeans by these mild and seemingly pleasant people, inhabiting these favoured regions.

Saturday, the 10th of May, our latitude was 5° 42′ S., long. 163° 8′ E., under a scorching sun and nearly becalmed, but with occasional squalls. A sail was seen on the horizon on our port beam. We were visited in the morning by a bird of curious proportions, which came and settled on the tafferel. It somewhat resembled a pigeon, with a long beak and dark feathers. One of the men caught it and had it for breakfast next day. Monday a total eclipse of the moon occurred from 10 to 12 P.M.; numerous porpoises had surrounded the ship during the evening. From Monday to Thursday we lay in an almost unbroken calm; but on the Thursday, 15th May, a breeze sprang up, which rapidly freshened into a gale. It gradually increased in force, and lasted altogether five days, with a few lulls. On the last day, Monday, it was at its height, roaring through the rigging with the noise of artillery, and the ship plunging and rolling in foam and surf. At eight bells forenoon all hands were

called to shorten sail, which had been already reduced to topsails, mainsail, and foresail. We now stowed all but main lower topsail. We were nearly blown off the yards in laying out; and the rain dashed in our faces so hard that it was impossible to look to windward. The sight and noise of a gale of wind seen from aloft are awfully wild. Immediately below is the boiling sea dashing and burying the jib-boom and forecastle-head in a mass of foam. At intervals a huge sea, tons in weight, literally tumbles across the main deck, crushing and sweeping everything before it. On all sides, as far as the eye can reach, mountainous waves roll over and over, their outlines lost in clouds of drifting spray. As for the noise of sea and wind, it is utterly indescribable. First, an infernal howl, shrilly whistling and whining; then a deep hollow roar, overwhelming in intensity,—howl and roar varying with the angle at which the wind strikes the ear. The heavy, shivering thud of the seas as they strike the gallant hull, causing the masts to shake and quiver under one, alone seem sufficient to

wrench the ship to pieces. Things go smoother ashore than at sea in a gale of wind.

Towards night it rapidly cleared up, and Tuesday saw us again under full sail: a bright sun and blue sky, and a nice steady breeze; no vestige of the previous day remained but a rolling, lumpy sea. Thursday, 22d May, we were in lat. 11° 15′ N., long. 151° E., with a fine breeze. This day, after repeated practice, I persuaded the second mate to allow me to take a regular wheel and look-out, and which I always afterwards took. Sunday the 25th, at 5 A.M., we sighted the island Rota, Ladrone group, lat. 14° 9′ N., long. 145° 30′ E. These seas are noted for the prevailing light winds; and when the sun is vertical, as it was with us at this time, the heat is overpowering. All the next week we made very little way; continual calms and light airs assailed us. We employed our time in cleaning and painting the ship, to show off her beauty in Hong-Kong. The Sea Queen was a pretty specimen of the fast modern clipper, and often had she been admired for her graceful

lines. Unfortunately, in bad weather she did not always behave as nicely as she might, sometimes rolling and pitching in bold defiance of centres of gravity and rotation, flooding the decks and inundating the berths.

Sunday, 1st June, lat. 18° 5′ N., long. 133° 15′ E. A steady breeze sprang up, carrying us along six to seven knots an hour. In the morning a shoal of blackfish was seen sporting close to the ship. The weather became very squally towards the end of the week, with head-winds. Saturday afternoon I hurried on deck, aroused by that horrid cry, "All hands shorten sail." A drenching rain was beating down upon us, and the sky showed some signs of an approaching typhoon. After taking in all the light sails, and things getting no worse, we went below, wet to the skin, every one out of sorts at being called at a false alarm, for the weather soon after cleared up and gave way to a fair wind. On the Monday we entered the Bashee group of islands, most of them desolate-looking and uninhabited. Natural consequence of being amongst islands, we were again becalmed until Thursday, when a head-wind

baffled us. This day we sighted several sail, the nearest proving to be the Windsor Castle (Blackwall Line), from Newcastle, N.S.W., to Hong-Kong, thirty-nine days out, having made a better passage so far than we had done, as she sailed considerably after we did. This was owing partly to her having taken a more easterly course, where the sea is more open, although the distance is somewhat greater. Friday, in the evening, a Chinese junk passed us a quarter of a mile off, looking one of the queerest constructions possible. Saturday, 15th June, we sighted the first Chinese land in some islands outlying from Hong-Kong. Towards night we hove to awaiting the pilot, who came aboard at about 2 A.M., when we at once made sail again.

CHAPTER VI.

HONG-KONG AND FOO-CHOW.

WHEN Sunday morning dawned we were sailing steadily up the winding waters to Hong-Kong, overshadowed by lofty islands, steep and barren; and owing to the clear atmosphere, their distance was very deceptive. The fishing-boats, with their two large butterfly-looking sails, had a very picturesque effect. Rounding Green Island, the town of Hong-Kong presented itself to our view. Quite a flotilla of sampans had fastened on to us by this time, and it was amusing to watch the state of excitement they were all in, for what purpose I don't know. We came to anchor at sunset, furled the sails neatly, and went below to tea. Our decks were thronged with natives selling fruit, cigars, and all sorts of wares, from

a bottle of curry to oilskin suits and sea-boots. The Chinese have a curious religious custom of lighting small red tapers at sunset, which they fix to various parts of their boats; I have frequently seen little children just able to walk performing this duty. The harbour was full of shipping; amongst it the Windsor Castle, which had arrived the previous day. The weather was very hot, forbidding us sleep on any less airy place than the forecastle-head, where we took up our blankets as a mattress every night.

Hong-Kong looks very stately from the water, with its large, white, tastefully-decorated buildings, almost palaces, lining the quays and extending up the slopes of Victoria Mount into pretty suburban mansions.

Hong-Kong (fragrant streams) island is one of a group called by the Portuguese Ladrones (thieves), from the character of the old inhabitants, and is situated near the mouth of the Canton river. Its length is about nine miles, breadth two to five miles, and area a little over twenty-nine square miles. The Ly-ee-moon Pass, a narrow channel separating the island

from the mainland, is not more than half a mile in width. The opposite peninsula of Kowloon was ceded to Great Britain in 1861, and now forms part of Hong-Kong. It possesses one of the best harbours in the world, surrounded by quaint red sandy hills rising between 2000 and 3000 feet high. The city of Victoria extends for four miles at the foot of the hills on the south side of the harbour, and contains 6000 houses, amongst which are the residences of the European merchants—magnificent mansions.

Owing to ships lying here at anchor away from the quays, we experienced some difficulty in getting ashore, as sampans are dear at Hong-Kong in comparison with Foo-chow or Shanghai. The first time I went ashore was to post the ship's letter. As I walked through the crowded narrow streets, I was greatly struck with the quaint native dress and shops; everything told of an Eastern town, the absence of vehicles and horses especially.

The first Sunday, the captain sent word for'ard asking the apprentices to accompany him with Mrs Ferguson, after dinner, up to

Victoria Peak.* Accordingly, having landed, we set off in sedan-chairs in single file, the time being about two o'clock. Reed went first, I second, M'Ewan third, Mrs Ferguson fourth, and the captain winding up the procession. As we gradually ascended the bare slopes of Victoria Mount the heat became intense, but was much compensated by the easy travelling. The chairs are roofed over, with blinds on each side; and being in the centre of two long bamboos running parallel, supported at each end on a man's shoulders, they have a most comfortable swing. Victoria Peak is the highest point in the island, and is immediately above the town. The Governor's summer-house is situated there, and also a guard-house and flag-staff, where all ships coming in are first signalled. It commands a magnificent view, but as regards extent only; beneath, all is barren, parched-up, grassy land, excepting the suburbs of the town, which European enterprise has laid out in gardens and planted with trees. In cloudy weather the clouds descend far below the Peak. Coming down, we halted by a spring to let the bearers

* 1825 feet above the level of the sea.

refresh themselves; and as we uncorked some ale, the captain gave our interesting natives a bottle among them. Seeing it would not go all round (ten in number), they sagaciously mixed it with water to an almost unlimited amount.

The meat ships obtain in China is buffalo; and barring its being a little tough sometimes, I found it quite equal to English beef. Eggs are cheap and fresh—so is fruit: the different kinds of the latter it would be quite impossible to name; suffice it to say, they are all more or less luscious. Captains always engage a native boat to supply the crew with fancy wares and food in the shape of eggs, soft bread (nautical term, "tommy"), curry, chutney, and various other little accessories of life courted by Jack in port. They are called bumboats, and come alongside every morning for an hour or so; by their means sailors are enabled to buy almost anything they want without waiting for an opportunity to go ashore, which seldom occurs, lying so far off as in Hong-Kong. Intoxicating drinks are, however, strictly forbidden to be supplied.

After working hours (*i.e.*, 6 P.M.) I often swam

aboard other ships, as it is a very common practice in China among sailors. Mr Alton came to grief here through drink. A better officer could not be found anywhere. Smart in his duties, never hesitating to lend a hand on a rope when occasion required, and liked by the men, everything went well at sea, where strong drink was not abundant. Neither was he a man to drink by himself; unfortunately, with friends he knew no bounds. He was discharged; and Mr Mason, holding a captain's certificate, was appointed first mate in his place, to the astonishment of all hands, who knew him to be far worse than Mr Alton: yet, notwithstanding that his normal condition was that of "half-seas over," he had succeeded to a great extent in hiding the fact from the captain.

We did not begin discharging cargo until eight days after arrival, through the delay of our agents' orders. Dirt enveloped us again, though perhaps to a less extent than in Newcastle, owing to coal being discharged in China by the natives, who pass it up in little flat baskets, rigging up stages as they work down the hold; and each basket passing from hand to hand over

the bulwarks, and down into the native lighter alongside, very little dust escapes.

The native shops have no glass, but the consequent naked look is made up by bright colouring and gilding—the latter particularly at the back of the shop. Each one has his name and trade inscribed on a long sign outside—a thin narrow board hanging perpendicularly, with large gilded characters on a vermilion background. The less busy parts of the streets, as regards European commerce, are lined with stalls and barrows, selling fruit and sweetmeats, delicious to look at; but not knowing how the delicately-peeled pears, *glacé* and superbly-tinted confectionery were prepared, I never was tempted to buy any. Cigars are cheap and good; and being aware of this, I did not hesitate in bartering a flannel shirt for boxes containing about three hundred, which were offered me one day aboard by a cunning rascal who was well up in the art of swindling. They certainly looked good outside, but that was all; for I soon discovered they were all stuffed with sand. Keeping this fact to myself, I sold them at fifty per cent profit to a shipmate, who, very properly, never paid me.

Strolling on "liberty day" through the narrow streets and alleys, I came across a native place of worship—a Joss-house—which I forthwith entered. The interior bore a marked resemblance to a Roman Catholic or Ritualistic place of worship. A large altar stood at the end of the church, facing the entrance, supporting a big idol, painted black, with immense horns and teeth; on each side were vases holding flowers, and at each end a huge candle. Some natives knelt, prostrating themselves, before the grim monster, whose material form had been so happily portrayed by their ancestors' imagination, aided by consciences similar in shade and proportions to the object produced. My smoking was apparently not objectionable in the sacred building, or I suppose somebody would have stopped me. In out-of-the-way corners were little chapels dedicated to inferior deities, and containing respectively their idols. A Chinaman's conscience must in reality be guilty to produce such horrid images. Looking into a small chamber partitioned off from the larger room, I saw the priest asleep on a bare matting, with a little lamp burning by his side. Judg-

ing by appearances, luxury was unknown to him. Emerging from this edifice I walked into a native school, composed of little boys from about seven to fourteen, who were all busy writing, or rather drawing, hieroglyphics, each a symbol of a word.

Having discharged all our coal and taken in ballast, we cleared the decks and prepared for sea, being bound for Foo-chow, some three hundred miles up the coast, to obtain a tea-freight for Europe, and perhaps for London, whither, I was told, the owners had written to the captain to proceed. Our "staff" had seen another sweeping change. As before mentioned, Mr Mason had been promoted to first mate in place of Mr Alton, discharged; and a new second mate had been shipped, Mr Norman. Our steward (shipped at Newcastle), whose imbibing qualities would have outdone a fish's and rivalled an oyster's, was dismissed for continual drunkenness, and went straight to the hospital to recover his brains. The cook left too, through some petty grievances aft, which we much regretted, as he was the soul of the ship, and always obliging in his galley. Besides these, an

able seaman and ordinary seaman were shipped, replacing others whose discharges had been granted. Many sailors ask their discharges without any reason whatever, merely that they want a change, which eventually becomes a habit.

On the 2d of July, in the afternoon, we weighed anchor to the tune "I served my time in the Blackball Line," and, wafted by a gentle breeze, we glided slowly along past the shipping, and rounding Green Island we soon lost sight of the white, clean-looking town of Hong-Kong. As evening drew on, the wind freshened so much that we had to shorten sail to topsails; but as the weather still looked very threatening, the anchor was let go for the night. During the night the gale increased, and in consequence we let go the other anchor, paying out considerably on both. At daybreak matters were the same, and by bearings taken overnight we found the ship to be drifting inshore. However, we succeeded in bringing up by paying out more cable. Being still in the port limits of Hong-Kong, we were completely hemmed in by land upon every side, excepting one little opening, some eight or

ten miles off, showing the open sea. Our pilot, a native, became very excited, and told the captain to prepare for a typhoon. Accordingly we set to, securing everything on deck with stout lashings, sent down royal and top-gallant yards, and, finally, housed the mizzen top-gallant mast. The pilot begged of the captain to allow him to go ashore in his junk, containing his wife and children, and which held on to us by a line; but this he stoutly refused, as he was ignorant of the waters himself. But in the afternoon a sudden blast struck us with unusual severity, roaring through the rigging with a deafening noise; and the knowing and terror-stricken pilot, thinking it was all up with the ship, sagaciously looked after himself by sliding down the line and dragging himself through the foaming sea aboard his junk, when he let go our line and made for the land—with what success I cannot say, as the heavy sea, rain, and mist reduced our range of vision to very narrow limits.

Next morning the clouds began to divide—sign that the worst had passed. We began heaving up anchor after breakfast; but through the heavy sea and great length of cable out on

both anchors, we progressed but slowly. Towards five o'clock in the evening M'Ewan left the windlass, saying he felt unwell. Half an hour after, I myself was obliged to leave work from an attack of giddiness and sickness; and by dark, when orders were given to knock off heaving, several of the men were affected similarly. During the night we continually vomited, but I the most often, at intervals of ten to fifteen minutes. Next morning I was so weak that I had to lie in my bunk. M'Ewan was not quite so bad. By this time nearly all hands in the forecastle were ill; consequently the anchors could not be weighed, and the topsails, which had been loosed in readiness for making sail, were left all night flapping in the wind.

The following morning, as things looked serious, the captain sent Reed (who was about the only one well) aboard a P. & O. steamer, lying half a mile off, for their surgeon. He came to our berth first with the captain, and said the pork was very bad, and our water no better. But then I certainly had been eating daily a quantity of bananas, litches, and preserved ginger (cheap and bad, in molasses), besides

drinking largely of bottled lemonade (four cents a bottle). To what extent this fare applied to the rest of the crew, I will not say. The result of the P. & O. doctor's visit was a charge of £7 to the ship and a dose of castor-oil all round. When next morning came we all turned to as usual, and continued heaving up anchor; but I still felt anything but right. By noon the anchors were nearly at the bows; and with all plain sail set, tacks well down, and sheets well aft, we sped along out to sea with a leading wind, Saturday, 5th July.

As soon as we got clear of the coast (about 6 or 7 P.M.), the wind fell to a very light breeze, and during the night we barely did two knots an hour. Sunday afternoon we were boarded by some fishermen, of whom the captain bought some fish after a good deal of bargaining—we, of course, having no money, as, sailor-like, we had spent our last farthings before leaving port.

During the afternoon of Monday we saw a "sea-serpent;" and what is more, actually caught it! It was not formidable-looking, nor very big—two feet at the most. The cook, leaning over the bulwarks drawing a bucket of

water, called our attention to a snake quietly gliding through the water, which, being a dead calm, was as smooth as glass. As its motion was very slow, we resolved to catch it; so bending a rope's end on to a bucket, the cook cleverly hauled the marine monster aboard. It closely resembled the common adder, and had very probably been washed out to sea by one of the rivers, although, the land not being visible, the coast must have been many miles off. I felt almost sorry we had caught it; for had we not, it would undoubtedly have crossed some other ship's path less practical but more imaginative, whose captain very likely would have made an entry in the log to the effect that he had really seen the sea-serpent of vast size and diabolical looks. The captain preserved it in a bottle of spirits of wine.

Only light breezes favoured us day after day, and they even occasionally died away to a calm. We had plenty to do, however, in cleaning the hold for a tea-cargo (tea-shippers are wonderfully particular about a clean hold), which after coal was a hard and dirty task, especially in these hot latitudes, where the air is

already rarefied enough, without being alloyed with coal-dust. Knocking and scraping the ironwork, cleaning the dirt out from the skin, scrubbing and pumping, our watches on deck were not idle. I continued very weak, and was quite unable to do any heavy work. I could eat nothing,—the pork was putrid; and so completely did I turn against it, that I never wholly overcame the dislike afterwards. On the Wednesday evening I ground the cook's coffee, and got two tablespoonfuls of mashed potatoes from him for the job, which was the first passable meal I had made since leaving port. Thursday night closed in with lightning round the horizon, and soon after our watch turned in (our first watch below —*i. e.*, 8 to 12 P.M.) a heavy thunderstorm burst over us, which nevertheless did not prevent me sleeping soundly till eight bells. When our watch came on deck at midnight the storm still raged. The rain poured down in masses of water perpendicularly, as not a breath of air stirred. I never before saw such lightning; it was quite blinding in its intense vividness. A little before two bells (2 o'clock A.M.) the second mate sent me to sweep the poop (decks

are always swept at sea when it rains, but not usually at night-time); for this I formed a very unfavourable opinion of him, and inwardly cursed him. "Growl you may, but go you must," says the sea ditty. I gladly turned in again at 4 A.M., and by morning all vestiges of the furious thunderstorm had passed away.

Friday evening we sighted a lighthouse, which the captain had been looking out for; and as soon as it became dark we dropped anchor, stowed the sails, "chalked" for watches, and turned in for the night. At daybreak we loosed sail, weighed anchor, and proceeded under small canvas on our course to the mouth of the river Min, leading up to Foo-chow. We shortly after signalled a pilot-boat, and took a pilot (European) aboard. The sea-pilots are all Europeans, in Yankee cutters, manned by half-a-dozen natives. The native pilots, as a rule, only ply on the rivers, and then only for ridiculous distances, as will be seen hereafter. Propelled by a gentle breeze on a smooth sea, the coast steadily developed before us, sandy and burning to the eyes. As we entered the river the breeze somewhat freshened, carrying us along

at about seven knots. Our European now gave place to a native pilot. A number of big junks lay anchored at the mouth of the river, deeply loaded with timber, known here as "poles." Our progress was much checked by the tide, which runs very swiftly in the river Min. A high ridge of mountainous hills flanked the river on either side; and when an opening occurred, others could be seen as far as the eye could reach. At one time the sides would be highly cultivated with rice, grown in regular bands, the distance between each being marked by a step like a flight of stairs. Next would follow barren and desolate views—rocky mountains, black and purple, according to the light, supporting a few straggling firs. The villages had a peculiarly quaint look, nestled in little nooks, with fantastic roofs to the huts. The military forts, planted at intervals on commanding sites, appeared more ridiculous than formidable. Their positions were indicated by a line of white mounds, something like stout columns cut off at a height of seven or eight feet, and a few feet apart to allow the firing of the cannons, which, nevertheless, were as scarce as they were

worthless. The sentinels, too, were no doubt looking after their absent guns, for I never saw a living creature occupying these forts.

We steadily sailed up; and on account of the continuous bends in the river, we had enough to do in squaring and bracing up the yards, setting and hauling down staysails, and even headsails and spanker where the helm could not manage the rounding of an awkward point. Emerging from a narrow reach, we entered a wide expanse of water, almost like a branch of the sea. Here our pilot left us, his navigating knowledge extending no further; and as night was coming on, we let go the anchor after gradually stowing the sails. In the morning we were all engaged buying soft bread and eggs from the "bumboat" man. For breakfast we had fresh meat; and with half a pound of steak, four eggs, and a small loaf and pint of passable coffee, I set to. I *did* enjoy this meal, and I wanted it badly after my forced abstinence since leaving Hong-Kong. Waiting for the tide to turn, and being Sunday morning, we had nothing to do till eleven o'clock, when we took another native pilot aboard, weighed an-

chor, and proceeded to the anchorage some six miles higher up, where we arrived at 1 P.M., furled the sails, and had the rest of the Sunday to ourselves—13th July.

"Pagoda Anchorage" (named after a very old pagoda built on the top of an island called Pagoda Island) is formed by the river suddenly widening (to an extent of about two miles in some places) into a large sheet of water, having the appearance of an inland lake encompassed with mountains—a few patches cultivated with rice struggling here and there to enliven the otherwise desolate scene. On one side are built some European houses—two ship-chandlers, an English chapel (very small), and several private dwellings belonging to English engineers and officials connected with the Chinese arsenal, of which Foo-chow boasts the first in the empire; and on the top of a hill stands the doctor's house (resident Englishman—for the shipping principally), a little below that of the British Consul, which latter commands a fine view of the whole anchorage. The only structure on the opposite side is the Chinese Custom-house, of European architecture, and only recently

erected. But the Pagoda Island contrasts by its beauty with the melancholy mountains. It rises steeply from the water, and is covered with shrubs and trees, between the openings of which can be seen native houses and huts, with curiously-decorated fronts and roofs: strange little structures some of them, propped up out of the water by long bamboos, upon whose sometimes doubtful and precarious support the whole concerns depend. Crowning this pretty little oasis stands the old pagoda, built of stone; which, judging by its dilapidated condition and weather-beaten appearance, must be some hundreds of years old.

CHAPTER VII.

WAITING FOR FREIGHT.

HAVING come in ballast, we had nothing to discharge. The captain's object was to get a freight of tea for London; but this he failed to do, on account of our arriving late in the season and there being several large steamers in the port, which reduced freights generally. However, everything was done that was possible to induce shippers to give us a cargo. From morning till night we were down in the hold scraping and scrubbing, most of the time by candle-light. At one time it appeared as if the captain had been successful, for a large "tea-chop" (a tea-barge) came alongside laden with tea-chests labelled "London," and which were in due course neatly stowed away in our hold. Unfor-

tunately no others followed; and finally a gang of natives came, who took away what we already had. I presume from this that there was some misunderstanding about the freight. The time passed dreadfully slowly. After unbending the sails and cleaning ship, we had little to do. The decks were scraped and holystoned fore and aft by natives, after having been caulked in Hong-Kong. At night we all slept on the fore-castle-head, protected by the awning from the moon (many people believe that the rays falling on the face distort the features). When lying at anchor in port, watch is kept all night by one of the men, who turns in during the day. A strange sound like a sharp rap on a board, repeated twice, was constantly heard at night-time in the distance, and had a very peculiar effect, breaking, as it did, a death-like stillness; but I never could learn what it was.

This anchorage was certainly the most solitary place I was ever at. The city of Foo-chow is situated eight miles higher up the river, which above the anchorage is too full of shoals for ships to venture up, and all the tea for the ships is sent down in the barges before mentioned.

The principal event is the arrival or departure of a vessel. Directly a white sail is seen in the distance, seemingly emerging from nowhere, all the ships' glasses are turned upon it, endeavouring to solve the question of who she can be. The same excitement prevails on a ship leaving, and this is enhanced by a custom here of firing cannon on the occasion.

Reed became very poorly, having to keep to his bunk at last. The doctor advised the captain to send him to the hospital ashore, where, after a fortnight's sojourn, he regained his health. About this time also I suffered much pain from an abscess in the ear, produced, I was told, from some dirt washing into it whilst bathing. The doctor visited me every day, but his remedies did me no good. Sleep was out of the question day or night; the greater part of the night I paced the deck. I endured this pain about a week, when the doctor ordered me three leeches, which "Chips" (the carpenter) carefully applied one Saturday afternoon whilst decks were being washed. After this little operation the abscess quickly disappeared. Bathing was forbidden me some little while after, which was hard for me to

obey, as we had great sport of an evening in the water when the tide was slack. Meanwhile the Duke of Abercorn had arrived from Shanghai, whither she had gone from Sydney; and when my ear allowed me, I swam aboard. I often did this afterwards, their apprentices occasionally honouring us with a visit in like manner—trousers and pipe being immediately supplied to the aquatic visitors.

I nearly got carried away by the current one evening. The tide was ebbing, and wanted another hour before slack water; but wishing to try my strength, I resolved to swim to the Duke of Abercorn, lying about four points on our starboard bow, and at a considerable distance off, so that I had to stem the full force of the current. Arriving half-way, I found I had overrated my power, the more so as the Duke of Abercorn lay more towards the middle of the river, where the tide was swifter. When within twenty yards of her beam, I thought I could not possibly reach her; so singing out to them, as well as I was able, to pay out a line over the stern that I might drift down on, I trusted to this last chance. However, the tide swept

me so close to her quarter, that I managed to lay hold of a rope's end which one of the apprentices threw me, and by its means I succeeded in getting aboard much exhausted. The apprentices in this vessel lived in a house on the quarter-deck, and altogether were much more comfortable than ourselves.

Day after day, week after week, rolled by without any prospect of a tea-charter. The weather also was intensely hot, and the time grew very monotonous. There being no going ashore, made the life more unpleasant than at sea. On Sundays, however, we might have gone if we had chosen; but sailors do not care about going ashore when they have no money to spend, or if they had, nowhere to spend it. As regards food, we had plenty. The meat, though tough, was as fresh as could be. Unhappily, the first two weeks we had potatoes, distinguishable as "sweet," and which were so peculiarly repulsive to the majority of our tastes, that they either went to feed a pig we had taken aboard in Newcastle, N.S.W., or else over the side. Ships' crews invariably get these potatoes in China and India, probably because of their

cheapness. Soak a large floury potato in eau-de-Cologne well sweetened, and you will make a very good resemblance of one. When the captain saw that they really went straight from the galley overboard, he substituted a large turnip-looking root known by the natives as "coco" (thus pronounced). These fared hardly better than their insipid brethren at the hands of the men. For my part, I liked them immensely. They were like potatoes in shape, of a purple colour, and when cooked, the inside was like damp starchy flour of no particular flavour, if any; nevertheless I enjoyed them more than English potatoes.

There were two men-o'-war in port, one Chinese and the other the English gunboat Teazer, a smart little steamer of 400 tons, with raking masts. Our captain knew one of the officers, and our "Chips" and theirs were also great friends. One evening the captain gave a dinner to the said naval officer, the English doctor (with whom he became very intimate), and a few other friends. It was served on the poop (covered as usual by an awning), and screened off from for'ard by the large ensign. A good deal of

preparation was made; and as two more hands were required when "dishing-up" time came, Reed and I went aft, he helping to wait at table, I washing up the plates and dishes in the pantry, and otherwise clearing up (in a double sense). The steward was already half-screwed when I first came, and did not fail to become totally so during the course of the next hour. He insisted on flavouring a dish of Normandy pippins with Worcester sauce, and would not allow me to interfere. As he staggered out of the door towards the poop-ladder, I stopped decanting a bottle of sherry to hear the effect of his seasoning, and was already laughing in anticipation, when a sudden crash, followed by the rolling of a heavy body on the main-deck, brought me quickly out of the pantry. The steward had missed his footing on the top step of the ladder, and, breaking the dish in the fall, had scattered the ill-used pippins to all points of the compass. I informed the captain that the steward and pippins had come to grief, and he was thus saved the mortification of having the obnoxious mixture handed to his friends. Like most drunken people, the steward ap-

peared none the worse for his fall; and after trying hard but failing to do any more mischief, he settled down in a sound sleep by the after-capstan. By one o'clock the guests had departed, the captain and his wife had retired to their cabin, the steward lay fast asleep on the quarter-deck outside the passage-door, and the second steward (a Chinaman) and Reed were busy clearing away on the poop. For his drunkenness the steward was discharged a few days afterwards.

The second mate (shipped in Hong-Kong), wishing to get to Australia, asked for his discharge, and went aboard a bark named the Belted Will, bound for Sydney. He was a strange fellow, a Jerseyman, a thorough "forecastle man" (always siding with the men), which latter quality, however, he carried a little too far—as, for instance, when the chief mate left him to superintend any work for'ard, he soon found his way into the forecastle, where he yarned with the men who had followed his example. Of course this could not have lasted,

CHAPTER VIII.

FOR SHANGHAI.

OVER five weeks had passed since our arrival, and we still remained without a freight; and, sailor-like, we began to speculate freely upon our destination, aided by the customary unfathomable rumours. One day it was reported that we were going to Formosa to load coals for Borneo; then that the captain had accepted a charter of tea back to Sydney. At last it transpired that he had arranged to take a native cargo of "poles" (trunks of trees) to Shanghai, in the hopes of securing a tea-freight there for London. The owners had written to him, attacking him severely for his want of success; and being a thoroughly conscientious man, he seemed to feel it. Having bent the sails, we

manned the windlass, and, the anchors tripped, we slowly drifted up at flood-tide with the three upper topsails set, although for want of wind they hung lazily down the masts. We let go the anchors again somewhere abreast of the British Consulate, the usual moorings for vessels loading "poles." To prevent too much drift in swinging with the tide (which would naturally be the case if a ship let go both anchors at once), and consequently fouling other craft, one anchor is let go, while she has still way on, with sixty fathoms, and bringing up at that, the other is dropped with thirty fathoms, allowing that length to be hove in upon the other, which equalises the length upon both at thirty; so that although the vessel still swings with the tide, she only does so in her own length.

Large rafts are formed of these logs of timber and drifted down the river to the ships and junks. To get them aboard they begin by rigging a floating stage alongside the main hatch; and resting on this and the ship's side, on a level with the main-deck, are placed half-a-dozen of the logs, on which they slide the others up; and being very slimy from their

watery journey, but very little exertion is required. Three or four men (natives) are occupied, in floating the logs, end on to the beam, to the stage, where each is partly hauled out of the water by two men to within reach of the next two men, who pass it on in their turn, till it shoots on deck through the port, when, guided and checked, it dives down the hatchway. Each man is armed with a long stick tipped with a sharp hook or curved spike, which they dig into the timber; and as they all clap on and haul together, they keep time by singing a strange, monotonous air.

The resident doctor was a crack hand at boat-sailing, and with his little Chinese-rigged craft he had both raced and beaten nearly all the ships' boats that had contended with him. Having challenged us, our cutter was launched from off the skids, and speedily rigged and ballasted. She looked all that could be desired, excepting being rather wet, caused by a provoking leak, which kept one hand constantly baling out. She was placed in charge of the chief mate, who had with him Turner (acting second mate since the discharge of that officer)

and two men. To our great surprise we won by a considerable distance. But I think the strong breeze then blowing had a good deal to do with it, as the doctor's light boat had to take in canvas when our heavy cutter had every inch set. Still we felt proud of the victory.

We were fast loading; rafts came down every morning, sometimes before daybreak, their wretched navigators rousing us out on deck with an abomination of yells, asking for a rope's end to bring up by before the strong tide carried them past the ship. In ordinary routine and work one day was like another. Roused out at half-past five by the night-watchman, Bill Baker, a North German by birth, but certainly not by name or tongue (sailors soon lose their instincts of nationality by sailing in foreign ships: indeed I have noticed this among English seamen who had always sailed in English ships; the roving life, the outcast condition of the profession, and their familiarity with all parts of the world in general and none in particular—all go a great way in making a cosmopolitan man of the mercantile tar), we fetched our coffee from the galley, lit our

pipes, and lay on our chests collecting our sleepy senses till six o'clock, when the second mate, "Mr" Turner, would stroll for'ard, and sing out a deep, short "turn to," and invariably looking in the house, adding, "Now then, you chaps, tumble up! When I was a young apprentice I always set an example to the men by being first on deck,"—or something of that strain. Pannikins and sugar-pots were bundled away in the locker, and belts and sheath-knives buckled on. The head-pump was rigged, the coil of the canvas hose being rolled down on the main-deck, and the end put in the wash-deck tub, which it was the apprentices' duty to keep constantly filled with water, while Turner hove bucketfuls right and left for the men to sweep and clean with. As the decks were washed down fore and aft, this job occupied us till breakfast, eight o'clock. After the hour allowed for breakfast, we were set to work again, some repairing the rigging, two or three sail-mending. Others would be occasionally employed at painting, as there is always more or less of that going on in port in fine weather. We apprentices got all sorts of jobs, cleaning

out a cabin aft, or helping the hands aloft by holding the tar and grease pots and "passing the ball." The heat was very great aloft though, which made us feel glad to get down again. At one o'clock we went to dinner, fore and aft, and came on deck again at 2 P.M. We then resumed our respective work until 5 or 5.30 P.M., when the A.B.'s went below, the ordinary seamen and ourselves following after having swept and tidied up the decks "ship-shape and Bristol fashion." At six o'clock the cook, streaming with perspiration, and nearly baked himself, would sing out from his galley "Tea ho!" signal for us to get our hook-pots filled, and fetch our kid of hash, which the cook favoured us by making out of the meat left from dinner. After this meal we did what we liked. Some bathed, others sat on the forecastle-head smoking or yarning or playing cards, while a few mended their clothes. But by far the greater number went in for a swim; and glorious sport we had, diving, racing, and ducking others, to be ducked in turn one's self. At dusk we generally gathered on the forecastle-head, where one of the older sailors would strike up a good

old sea-going song, which we joined in at the chorus, as did frequently the crews of the nearer ships. The best singer was an A.B. we shipped in Hong-Kong, and who afterwards became cook. He was a dry, comical fellow, and had been a "John-o'-fight" (man-o'-war's-man). His songs were capital in every way, but the one which always sent us raving in sympathy of mind and heart was one entitled "The Merchant Shipping Act"—a clever, ironical skit upon that blundering piece of marine red-tapism. It was a little deficient in rhyme, but Jack does not mind that so long as his feelings are expressed. The chorus went—

"So what's the use of growling when you know you get your
'whack'—
Tea, sugar, and coffee, and everything exact?
So what's the use of growling when you know it is a fact—
Lime-juice and vinegar according to the Act?"

I forgot to mention that at eight every morning two apprentices had to hoist the flags—one the ensign, and the other the "house flag" at the main—this latter job being by far the most troublesome, as it necessitated climbing up in the top, the halyards being too short to lead

down on deck. We, like most other ships, took our time from the man-o'-war; and consequently, directly the first sound of their bell was heard, Reed and I (junior apprentices' duty) made a rush aft for the ensign, the lighter task.

By nine o'clock all was still. We had taken up our bedding to the forecastle-head, and were all more or less endeavouring to obtain that sweet restorer meted out by Morpheus.

After the hold was full, the hatches were battened down, and the ropes coiled up in the rigging to make clear for a deck-load, which was to be "flush" with the top of the bulwarks. Sailors do not like deck-loads. It hampers up the ship; but that is the least of the evils. In bad weather it is almost impossible to walk about; and one is in constant danger of being washed overboard. Besides, we knew what the consequences would be of shipping a sea; the timber would be floated up, and the big logs rolling under our feet would place us in imminent peril. All we could do was to hope for a fine-weather passage up to Shanghai, which was very doubtful, as the season was setting in for the change of monsoons. In the China seas

the wind blows for six months of the year from the S.W., and the other six from N.E.; and during the five or six weeks' interval of shifting, those furious storms known as typhoons take place. As we were now in the month of September, the S.W. monsoon was about giving way to the N.E.; frequent squalls occurring, and the wind shifting round to all points of the compass in the course of a day.

Turner, our acting second mate, received orders from the captain to take his chest aft and occupy the second mate's berth. He was in high spirits when he came into the house one morning after breakfast and told us the news, which, for our own part, we were not sorry to hear, as, being senior apprentice, and within a month of the expiration of his indentures, he considered himself much above us; and being terribly conceited and self-willed, he could make it very unpleasant for us when he liked. Still he was a good-hearted fellow, giving away freely anything he possessed. After he had cleared out his chest and bedding, a dispute arose between Reed and me as to who should take his bunk. When Mr Paxton left

us in Newcastle, N.S.W., M'Ewan claimed his bunk. (The top bunks are greatly preferred, as there is more room; and in bad weather, a sea breaking in through the doorway very seldom wets them, whereas the lower ones are often drenched.) Reed then took M'Ewan's bunk, as his own was athwartship, and so nicely placed under two ventilators in the roof, which were screwed half open, and rusted at that, that whenever a sea broke over the house, or it rained heavily, his bed resembled a marsh more than anything else. So M'Ewan occupied the top, and Reed the lower bunk, on the starboard side; while Turner and I still held top and lower one respectively on the port side. Reed laid claim to Turner's bunk because he had never had one that was properly his own, whilst I based my right on that of rotation. However, having proposed drawing for it, I lost, and Reed had it ever afterwards. We were now three in the house, the "thwartships" and port lower bunks remaining vacant. We felt free to do as we liked, and certainly things went smoother in the messing at sea.

At last we hoisted the blue-peter at the fore,

and took the last "pole" inboard, Saturday, 30th August. Sunday, we smoked and yarned on the forecastle-head, and bade farewell to the desolate barren mountains seven weeks after we first beheld them. Early Monday morning, 1st September, the native pilot came aboard, and having weighed anchor, we proceeded slowly down the anchorage, surrounded by swarms of sampans, under charge of the pilot, to guide the ship; but for all the good they do, and all the strength they exert, ships could manage as well without them. The wind blew up the river, and we had the satisfaction of foreseeing a beat down to the sea, or rather a drift down, as, with a head-wind in a narrow river, vessels drop down broadside on as far as the ebb tide will carry them, when they let go their anchor and wait for the next ebb. On account of the distance to the sea, we could not possibly do it under two days, and very likely would take more.

Having reached the end of the anchorage where the narrow river opens out, it came on to blow rather strong, which obliged the captain to drop anchor. Being eight o'clock, we went to

breakfast after having furled all the sails. During the rest of the day, we were employed at various work upon the rigging, and lashing the harness-casks on the quarter-deck—just sufficient space being left to allow the two passage-doors to be opened, the timber reaching from thence to the break of the forecastle for'ard, and which doors, and those on either side of our berth, as well as the galley, the timber left tolerably clear. The weather brightening up in the night, but still with a head-wind, we hove up at 5 A.M. and proceeded on our difficult way, broadside on—and a heavier task it would be difficult to find. Such narrow parts has this river Min, that it is sometimes only three or four ships' lengths in width. Backing and filling, hauling the yards round, hoisting the jibs, and brailing in the spanker, or *vice versâ*, we had enough to do; and by the time the tide slackened, and we dropped anchor at 1 P.M., we had barely any breath left in us. The wind having died away to a gentle breeze, we left the sails hanging, trimming the yards to the wind, and went to dinner. After dinner, Turner came for'ard and told Reed and me to go aft to shift some bales of native pro-

duce stored in the cuddy. We "growled" a bit at having to work when all the hands were nesting. Apprentices are always blessed with these odd jobs, forecastle hands never being called on deck when off duty, excepting when urgently required. We hove up again at seven in the evening and resumed our slow journey, which we could not have done had it not been near full moon and a clear sky. I was stationed on the poop with Reed, giving the lead to a dozen natives (pilot's gang) working the main braces and spanker. We had less hauling about than in the morning, probably because of the moonlight equalising visibly the distances from either shore. I had thus occasionally a little time to look about me, and contemplate the moonlit scenery. What fantastic shapes the rocks on the mountains had, and what a wild, melancholy aspect the whole view bore! The horse-shoe-shaped white stone graves of native grandees of bygone days shone clearly out from the dark mountain-sides, sadly reflecting the soft rays of the moon; and as we glided noiselessly along on the black water, the jib-boom end sometimes almost apparently touching the rocky

sides, I thought it a beautifully romantic sight. But my thoughts were suddenly brought back again to their everyday sphere by a stern voice sounding close by, "Hi there, S——! don't you hear? starboard main brace," which was the captain's, who was walking the poop smoking a cigar. The tide having nearly ceased flowing, we dropped anchor at 11.30 P.M., and furled the sails. We gladly rolled into our bunks and got what sleep we could before six the following morning, when we were roused out with "Man the windlass there, lads;" and tumbling up on the forecastle-head, we took to our old work again of walking round the windlass heaving up the anchor. We worked with a will, as this was to be the last of the "dropping down," this tide being sufficient to carry us down to the sea, which we reached in the afternoon. We left the anchorage on Monday morning, and this was Wednesday afternoon; we had thus been three days in traversing a distance we might have covered in as many hours had the wind been fair. Unfortunately the breeze died away to a calm at the mouth of the river, and we had to drop anchor again, with

the blue expanse of sea stretching out before us. During the latter part of the day we crossed the royal yards, and the native pilot left us—the European sea-pilot taking his place. At eight o'clock we "chalked" for watches, and my mark being rubbed out amongst the last, I got all night in.

At four o'clock next morning, Thursday, we weighed anchor, loosed the sails from royals downwards, and, wafted by a gentle breeze from land, we stood out to sea under a cloudless sky, with the sun already making his presence felt. We were not favoured long, for a calm succeeded the breeze when near some banks, on which a current was slowly drifting us. The quarter-boat was at once lowered, manned by four men; and with a rope made fast on the forecastle-head, they succeeded, after two hours' hard pulling, in hauling us clear into deep water. The poor fellows were done up when they came aboard again; for pulling under a sun which by this time was little less than scorching, was enough for any man. However, no breeze springing up, we had to drop anchor and wait for it. The heat was very great, and

told upon us more than usual. The captain was walking the poop with a wet handkerchief tied round his head. A lot of fishing-boats lay not far from us, their occupiers, in bold defiance of personal appearance, being utterly destitute of clothing. In the afternoon a sea-breeze sprang up, and we once more manned the windlass. We braced the yards sharp up, set every inch of canvas that would draw, and quietly glided through the smooth green water, with the wind just free. As evening drew on, the coast, with its ranges of dried sandy hills, gradually grew fainter; and anticipating the breeze would freshen as we cleared the land, we already began calculating how many days it would take to get to Shanghai, about 300 miles distant. After our long stay in port—namely, two months—things were out of sea-order fore and aft; and the first few spare moments we had we set to lashing, squaring, and "chocking off." Bottles which for weeks past had been standing here, there, and anywhere, were now stowed in snug corners and chocked off with bits of wood. Oilskin suits and sou'westers were sorted and hung up on their respective owners'

nails, and our chests all got more or less securely lashed (more often less, as proved by many a treacherous roll). The steward, a Chinaman, was equally busy in the pantry; not a hook but what held a cup or a jug, while saucers, plates, and dishes found safe quarters in shallow lockers. A sudden lurch plays "old gooseberry" with a careless steward.

By seven o'clock we were abreast of the "White Dogs" group of islands, and here the wind again fell to a dead calm. Sea-rules began at eight o'clock by the port watch being sent below. A little incident occurred this night which goes far to prove the cause of no small number of wrecks and collisions. The ship lay like a log in the water, and everything was as motionless as death. Not a breath of air nor cat's-paw rippled the glassy surface of the sea, which reflected unbroken the full moon, who in her turn held full sway above, unmolested by cloud or mist. A long silent swell, like the heaving of the chest, was only noticed by the moon's disc gradually lengthening, and then disappearing for a few seconds. The sails hung lazily down the

masts. Everything slept, and seemingly entreated us to do the same. We needed but too little pressing. Unable to keep my eyes open any longer, I lay down on the quarter-deck and was soon in the land of dreams. When I awoke I at once ran into the cuddy to see the time, for I felt I had been asleep a good while. It was exactly eight bells (midnight); and going on the poop to strike it, I found Turner, the officer of the watch, sound asleep on one of the hencoops, and the man at the wheel asleep on the wheel-box. I looked about me, but could see nothing moving; the moon shone brightly on a fine ship practically abandoned for the time being, and that, too, in a rocky sea. There was no man on the look-out, and the rest of the watch lay scattered about the logs on the main-deck. I struck eight bells, which had a magical effect. The officer sprang up as if thunderstruck, and commenced pacing the deck as usual. The helmsman quickly stood beside the wheel, mechanically looking at the sails, then at the compass, and fidgeting with the spokes; and I noticed a shadow (the "look-out") scrambling up the ladder on to the forecastle-head (over which

ladder the foresail cast a shade), and emerging into the moonlight he repeated the eight bells as if nothing out of the way had happened. Having called the mate, who, with all his faults, seldom delayed in turning out, I went for'ard and roused out Reed; and the "wheel" and "look-out" being relieved, I, with the rest of the starboard watch, turned in. The port watch all slept so soundly through their watch also that we were not called until 5 A.M., one hour after the proper time. They might have slept on longer too, had it not been for the steward, who is always called at five, and who awoke of himself. Now for nearly eight hours that night the vessel was left to take care of herself—whether against rocks, squalls, or collisions, as, of course, being a clear moonlight, we carried no lights. To save their oil, ships never burn their side lights when out on the open sea, excepting in crossing a well-frequented track. The captain knew nothing of the affair, as he went below soon after eight o'clock and did not come on deck again till 7 A.M. The above instance is the only one I can remember where the watch below were not called at eight bells; and

although the officer of the watch and spare hands on duty have certainly been asleep at the same time on other occasions, yet the "look-out" and the helmsman were always awake.

Calms and light airs prevailed without intermission until Wednesday following, and we made but little progress. The boundless blue water surrounded us, and we felt as if we were bound out again on a three months' voyage. Early on Wednesday morning the wind shifted round to the N.E., dead ahead; but we did our best by bracing the yards up as far as the back-stays would allow, at the same time heading in towards the land. When our watch came on deck at eight o'clock that morning the sky looked threatening. Small detached clouds of a pale smoky appearance drifted over us with the wind, and the sea was rising as the wind steadily increased. I was standing on the lee side of the house making 5-yarn sennit, when I heard the order, "Clew up the fore-royal," quickly followed by "Clew up the main royal." I sprang up the fore-rigging, and furled the fore-royal, while M'Ewan was at the main. The sea looked wild enough up there, reflecting the dark

leaden colour of the sky, and the white-crested waves tumbling one over the other. Before the end of the watch we had taken in the three top-gallant sails; and when the port watch relieved us at noon, we made haste over our dinner and turned in, for a black night was awaiting us. The wind was increasing fast, and we felt the stout craft shiver under us, as the foresail blew out of the bolt-ropes while they were trying to take it in. I knew what was coming. The door flew open, and Reed, rushing in with a "Hands on deck: reef top-sails there!" we slipped out of our bunks, growling at the port watch never doing their work, and things of that sort, thoroughly sailor-like. The foresail was a mass of rags, slashing furiously in the wind, and all we could do was to cut them away. Later on, while reefing the fore and main topsails, the inner and outer jibs were carried away. Seas now began to sweep over the bulwarks, floating the wood, and hurting our feet and legs (for want of boots I was barefooted), besides throwing us down at almost every step. The ropes also fared no better, many having to be cut away from the timber

having rolled over them. It was our middle watch that night, and a treat we had. I was on the look-out for the first two hours (12 to 2 A.M.); the only safe place being on some spars on the top of the house, reaching past the lee side of the foremast to the forecastle-head. Hanging on to the topsail-sheets, and sheltered by the foremast, I escaped the seas and spray, which at times swept under me. When I was relieved at four bells, I found the watch aft on the quarter-deck, the second mate having ordered them there because they could not hear his voice for'ard. We lay on the logs, wet through by the heavy spray sweeping over us, and shivering with the cold, until something presently occurred to warm us. A sudden crash, followed by a whirring roar, plainly told us the fate of the fore lower topsail. We were soon up the fore-rigging, and hanging out on the yard as best we could. Speaking of one's hands, an old sailor's ditty says, "one for the ship and one for yourself," when up aloft; and now was the time to put it in practice. It was a hand-to-hand fight. George, an A.B., a thoroughly good-hearted man, next to me, was

swearing formidably on account of a piece of the sail in slatting having taken a turn round his neck, which got some unpleasant tugs when the canvas filled. After a hard job we managed to secure the pieces, until daylight, by passing the gaskets round them.

The morning brought a less violent wind, although it still blew hard, and we could set nothing above upper topsails; the sea, too, ran very high. Soon after breakfast a pilot-boat hove in sight, and we backed the main-topsail, and waited for her to come up, ploughing over and sinking behind the big waves like a nut-shell. The first orders the pilot (an American) gave when he got aboard was to "wear ship," as we were heading in close to the land. "Stations!" sang out the captain. And as she paid off, "square the crossjack yards" (apprentice's station), "ease off main bow-line and tack," and "haul up the weather-clew of the mainsail." "Slack away the main-sheet and haul up the lee-clew." "Square your main-yard." "Let go your fore-bow-line, ease off fore-sheet, and brace in your fore-yards." We now had a few moments' spell, and as she flew

off before the wind, "board fore and main tacks" and "haul aft main-sheet." As she came up on the other side, "haul aft the fore-sheet" and "trim your yards up." What a supreme state of confusion and excitement "wearing ship" and "tacking ship" must appear to a landsman, especially in such a sea as this, sometimes towering above, then vanishing below us! The incomprehensible orders of the captain and mates, the rapidity with which they are executed by the men, with their taking yet wild songs as they pull together, the innumerable ropes flying about everywhere, and the sails flapping with their iron clews, and chain-sheets beating the most discordant sounds, must convey to him an impression of the impossibility of the good vessel ever looking "ship-shape and Bristol fashion" again.

It was my wheel from 12 to 2 P.M. in the afternoon, and as the wind had veered round to the S.W., we were standing straight in for the Yang-tsi-Kiang river under square yards. The ship flew about from side to side like a dolphin, shipping seas and wetting the watch, who each time held up their clenched fists at me with

uncomfortable significance. At last a climax came. They were hauling down the inner jib on the forecastle-head, and notwithstanding my utmost endeavours to meet a heavy sea that came swelling on to us, it dashed itself against the bows and flooded the forecastle-head with foam and spray. The poor fellows were wet through; but the captain sent an able seaman, Dick Lane, to the wheel to relieve me. He was a coloured man of about fifty years of age, and went by the name of "old father Dick," as much from his being the oldest man aboard, as on account of his good-natured and orderly qualities. A very curious effect produced by phosphorescence occurred in the second dog-watch. The wind and sea had still further gone down, and we had loosed the fore and main top-gallant sails. Going on the forecastle-head to have a yarn with George (his look-out), he pointed out to me a faint light on the lee horizon, just like that thrown by a large town. Although we knew full well no land could possibly be in that quarter, I went aft on the poop and told Turner, who at first was going to tell the pilot, who at the time was below with the captain.

However, deciding to wait till the evening grew darker, a very remarkable change took place. The brightness steadily increased until the sky over it became quite illuminated, and as we closely watched it, we found it to be advancing and spreading towards us, and to consist of nothing else but phosphorescence. Travelling rapidly on, it surrounded us like a sea of blue fire, the white sails reflecting the light in a beautiful manner. At last it vanished away on the weather horizon after a lapse of two hours since we first observed it on the other side. This was the brightest display that had ever been seen by any man aboard.

Saturday afternoon, 14th September, we entered the Yang-tsi-Kiang, the lead being kept constantly going from the main-chains, as shoals are but indifferently marked here. Nothing can be said of the scenery: it is level and unpicturesque; in fact, in many parts it strongly resembles the Thames below London. The water was of a muddy colour, and bore a good sprinkling of European shipping, and the day being thick and cloudy, made the similarity all the more marked. We took in

the sails one by one, and evening approaching, we dropped anchor at six o'clock, and having "chalked" for watches we turned in, mine falling from 12 to 1 A.M. The following morning, Sunday, before daybreak a steam-tug came alongside flying the Yankee ensign, and made fast to us; and having weighed anchor by five o'clock, we proceeded in tow, and with the tide up, to Shanghai City. Luckily the wind having hauled round ahead we had no sails to loose, so I had more time than usual to look about me. We passed a large American-built river-steamboat painted all white, of which there are several in Shanghai doing the carrying trade between the principal river ports. Towards 1 P.M. the tide failing us, the tug cast off and we let go the anchor, all hands going to dinner. Between 5 and 6 P.M. we hove up, the tug towing us as before. We soon after passed one of the finest specimens of our merchant navy, a P. and O. steamer. Being the first I had ever seen, I was much struck with her fine appearance. Her well-set-up rigging and clean hull, all uniform black, might have rivalled a man-o'-war for neatness.

As we approached the city, I thought my first idea of comparing the Yang-tsi-Kiang to the Thames still more justified. In the distance could be seen a crowding of masts, by a bend of the river, appearing inland, like ships in the Milwall or West India Docks; and one particular reach bore a strong likeness to the north bank of the Thames between Blackwall and Greenwich, only wanting the huge vessels on the stocks and Cubitt Town pier to complete the illusion. We anchored for the night below the shipping, waiting for the morning to be berthed higher up. A strange fatality seems to have overruled our Sundays. We entered Portland on a Sunday, we also entered Sydney on a Sunday, and the same day saw us into Hong-Kong and Foo-chow, and now again Shanghai. Sailors do not like going into port of a Sunday, as they believe captains arrange it purposely to get an extra day's work out of them.

CHAPTER IX.

SHANGHAI.

AT eight the next morning we towed slowly up past the shipping lining either side. I was stationed at the gaff-signal-halyards to dip the ensign as customary to the various men-o'-war in harbour. We anchored abreast of the French town. Shanghai is the head-centre of European commerce in China. The city is divided into four distinct parts, each governed by its own laws. The lower end is the American town, the English town comes next, then the French town, and finally and highest up the river stands the native Chinese town. The English is by far the most important, as its wider streets and handsomer buildings denote. Vessels of all nations lay in the stream below us; above, the

river swarmed with literally a forest of masts rising from junks and other native craft. In accordance with one of their strange superstitions, they beat gongs and drums every evening at sunset for half an hour or so, causing the most diabolical noise. The same furious devotion or antipathy to the evil spirits is also manifest whenever a junk is about to sail, every man of the crew either beating a gong or a drum, and as far as noise is concerned, most creditably. But it always struck me they had much more to fear from their own kind than from any evil spirit. In support of this, the over-armed condition of nearly every junk is evident: few but what carry four to half-a-dozen cannons of suspicious looks and qualities, and equally dangerous to either side, although, if I had the choice, I would sooner be fired at by one than fire one off. The China seas abound with pirates, who, within the last few years, limit themselves to attacking native craft as a rule, although occasionally they still attack Europeans, and sometimes with success.

Two days after our arrival, a gang of natives came alongside, and we commenced unloading

the "poles." We lay near an Italian gunboat, whose crew of an evening sang some most exquisite melodies in parts, rendered with the proficiency characterising a musical nation. But their excellence in song was not shared by their seamanship; and compared with any ordinary English man-o'-war, they were both slow and careless in their duties.

On the Sunday, I went ashore in the morning with M'Ewan to church, and after some inquiries as to localities, we entered Trinity Church, the most fashionable one in the town. It is a fine building of red brick, ornamented with white stone, and the music during the service was particularly pretty. It looked strange to see the English policeman in white felt helmet, loose jacket and white trousers, on one side of the boundary-line, and, on the other, the true type of the French gendarme, formidable in his cocked-hat and military tunic with long swallow-tails, and large white trousers, against which dangled his *épée*. And I could not help noticing the elegantly-cut and well-fitting dress of the latter, contrasting as it did

with the clumsily-shaped, thorough British rig-out of the former.

There is some difficulty in getting on and off shore here, especially in going aboard late at night; and instances are known of sailors, partly intoxicated, being thrown overboard after the sampan rascals had rifled their pockets. For this latter reason, I was always careful to choose a sampan with as few hands as possible. They generally ask as fare ten cents, but are well contented with two or three. However, happening to be later than usual one night, I thought I should have been unable to get aboard, as the tide was running down so strong that no sampan would shove off; but after walking some distance up the river and to windward like of the ship, I found two men who took me for a quarter-dollar, money down. They pulled away into the middle of the river, and drifted the rest with the rapid current, I keeping a bright look-out for the vessel, as, if we missed her, there would have been no hope of getting alongside until the tide turned.

There are some pretty gardens laid out by

the river—of course, in the English division. An amateur band, composed of gentlemen from the three towns, plays every Wednesday and Saturday from seven to ten. Strolling along the walks one evening, I met a young fellow belonging to the American ship Sea-Serpent. He was well connected, and had been a cadet in the American navy, which he left on account of the discipline. He lived with the carpenter in the after-part of the deck-house—a very comfortable little berth; and although receiving the pay and classed as ordinary seaman in the ship's articles, yet he did not rank as one of the crew. I learnt something from him about the Yankee service. No apprentices are taken in American ships. If a youth with a superior education wished to follow the sea and become an officer, his father would seek an introduction to a captain, who, in consideration of a certain sum of money, would take him in the same way as my friend. "Brass buttons" are entirely unknown; and any one wearing even a "cheese cutter," they call a "lime-juicer" (name given by Yankees to English ships and sailors because of their daily ration of lime-juice, which is not

served out in American ships). He envied English apprentices their brass buttons and flags and anchors on their caps, and told me he was much struck with the more regular discipline of our merchantmen. American mates are proverbially free in the use they make of belaying-pins. During our stay in Shanghai, a second mate so struck an ordinary seaman, that he died in consequence. Hauled up by the police, he was tried and found guilty of manslaughter, and was duly imprisoned.

I forgot to say that after coming out of church on the Sunday, M'Ewan returned aboard, whilst I determined to make a whole day ashore of it and buy my dinner somewhere. Walking leisurely along the Nankin Road, one of the principal thoroughfares of Shanghai, I noticed a crowd of natives come tumbling one over the other out of a passage or court. When things were somewhat quieted, I turned down the opening, as I saw an English policeman standing in a wide doorway. He beckoned to me to come near him, and he then informed me that the place at the door of which he kept order was a "sing-song," otherwise a Chinese theatre; and as he pressed me to go

in, saying, I should have nothing to pay, I entered. The interior was not unlike that of an English theatre in size, but everything fitted up in the plainest manner. The walls and indeed all the building were wood, with but little varnish or paint about it, and the tiers of seats in the pit and elsewhere were of plain white wood. The seats were all filled: their occupants, men, women, and children (all natives—I being the only European present), eagerly watching the performance. A theatrical play in China frequently lasts a week or a fortnight, in most cases beginning with the birth of the hero, and ending with his death. The orchestra sat at the back of the stage, and instead of playing when no acting was going on, kept up a furious clash and din all the time the players were performing. I was entirely ignorant whether I was witnessing a comedy, tragedy, or opera-bouffe: there seemed to be a little of each. The scene never changed; it represented the interior of a large room or hall. A middle-aged man (apparently her father) was talking to a young girl. Then a young man, grotesquely dressed (if that is possible beyond the usual Chinese costume), came

running on, and set the audience laughing with the questions he put, and the answers he gave to the girl. After a while these left the stage, which remained vacant for five minutes; the people composing the audience smoking and drinking tea served in diminutive cups, and, judging by the colour, of diminutive flavour. Presently two curtains were drawn, showing two doorways on each side of the stage; from these a procession of young girls came on, their powdered and painted faces and darkened brows and eyelashes fairly competing with the most forward of our European actresses. After crossing and twirling, they went through a set of steps and dances, when they sang a song remarkable only for its peculiarity. The Chinese always sing in falsetto without any regard to tune, and in bold defiance of harmony, and I have generally noticed they keep almost to one note: their musical instruments are nearly all monotonous.

The orchestra is worth describing. An enormous gong, a pair of cymbals, a tamtam, a curiously-shaped piece of wood, a big wooden bowl standing on three legs and played with a

couple of sticks, a wind instrument closely resembling a cocoa-nut, which upon being blown into produces a sound like that of a hollow spinning-top; and last, but not least, the fiddle —the Chinese fiddle. It is a bamboo tube, very thin, and about two feet long. Imagine a small spade with half the iron cut away, the remaining part wood instead of iron, and three or four inches deep, and hollow, and you will have a very good idea of its shape. Two strings of silk thread are stretched from the handle to the head, and are of course discordant, producing sounds which are absolutely infernal. Now a scrape, then a growl, a screech, a mew, a sonorous howl, and for a few seconds its noise is drowned in that of the comparatively harmonious gong. The rattle of the sticks on the wooden drum varies in its force, and is incessant, excepting when a sudden stop takes place, when, after a pause, a single note is struck with an overwhelming ring, and all go on with renewed vigour. Not content with the deafening uproar of their instruments, one or two lend their voices to it;

and being falsetto, with a range of three notes at the most, I leave you to guess the effect. The fiddle is the most common of all Chinese instruments. Sitting outside his house in the town, the Chinaman "accompanies" himself to his song in the evening twilight. On the water the twang is heard proceeding from some musical junk as night sets in; but the grinding of our cables with the sway of the tide produced such a remarkable similarity of sound that I was often unable to distinguish one from the other. I forgot to mention that they use no bow, but only the fingers.

Two warriors, apparelled in the most frightful-looking garments as far as design went, although gorgeous in gold and red colouring and beading, armed with bow and arrows, lances, and huge swords, put these fair singers to flight, they afterwards fighting with their lances a furious duel, properly seasoned with a due amount of jumping, crossing, and shouting, and ending with one of the combatants getting killed. The man and his daughter then appeared and talked about something, and when

they retired, some acrobats went through tolerable feats of jumping and climbing. My friend the policeman had meanwhile brought me a bottle of stout and some cigars; but notwithstanding, after two hours the horrid music began to tell on my stomach so severely that I was compelled to make my exit.

CHAPTER X.

FOO-CHOW AGAIN.

In the course of a week all the timber was unloaded, but still no freight for tea could be obtained. Captain Ferguson was much put out at this: not having succeeded in Foo-chow, he relied upon Shanghai. But one course lay before us now: that of returning to Foo-chow and getting a charter for New York, the season for the American teas just then coming on. We filled up, enough to ballast us, with native goods and medicines, two dozen sheep, and about a dozen native passengers. Amongst the former was beancake, isinglass, compoy, and wheat, which nearly filled the lower hold, the passengers being located in the 'tween decks. We left our moorings on Saturday the

27th September at noon, and towed down the river, dipping to, and answered by, the different men-o'-war. We passed several fine ships at anchor sadly disabled, some with their three masts gone, others without bulwarks. They had no doubt been through the same gale that assailed us coming here, only in a severer degree. We cast off the tug and came to anchor at dusk. In consequence of a head-wind we were obliged to remain at anchor until Tuesday, when we hove up at 4 A.M., loosed sail, and forthwith proceeded out to sea on our passage to Foo-chow. Before leaving the river we passed the Sobraon, a fine ship, hoisting her three topsails by steam.

Soon after clearing the coast the wind increased, and we took the royals and mizzen top-gallant sail in. Luckily it was a fair wind, a north-easter, and under its powerful impulse we boomed madly along with square yards, the good ship almost burying her bows in a boiling heap of foam and spray, in her endeavours to keep pace with the black rolling clouds overhead. At eight bells of the first watch (midnight) all hands were called to shorten sail. It

blew a gale, and no time was to be lost in taking in sail. The night was such as is usually met in heavy weather at sea: pitch-dark, the mountainous seas, with outline marked by a faint phosphorescence, rising and vanishing like huge spectres, although showing their tangibility by sweeping over the decks and dashing the spray as high as the tops; the whole accompanied by a roar and howl which is truly indescribable, and cannot be equalled ashore. We stowed the mainsail, foresail, and the three upper topsails; we were an hour up at the main. The wind being nearly aft, and the sea too heavy to allow of her being hauled up a few points, the sail remained full, and resembled more a sheet of iron than canvas. What with the beating rain and rolling of the ship, we had a hard time of it. At four bells (2 A.M.) the watch was sent below, and we remained alone on deck. I was coiling the ropes up on the poop, when, the skipper having gone below to look at the chart, Turner asked me to go for'ard and butter him a "cracker" (we had bought some butter between us before leaving Shanghai). I was reaching a biscuit

out of the bread "barge," when the captain's voice, singing out for me, broke suddenly upon my ear. He asked me angrily what business I had for'ard during my watch on deck, and told me to fetch a bucket and soup-tin and cloth at once. I soon found out what was the matter. A heavy sea had struck the starboard quarter as she came up after a lurch, and bursting open the port of the captain's bedroom, had washed poor Mrs Ferguson clean out of bed, besides flooding the cabins and cuddy. The captain had made a temporary bed for his wife on the deck in his state-room, it being an impossibility, from the rolling, to lie on the couch. After baling and swabbing and filling my bucket (which seemed to have as usual a peculiar knack of capsizing when three-quarters full) for half an hour, I managed to make the place look less damp; and Mrs Ferguson kindly brought me half a tumbler of port for my trouble, which made me hope a similar casualty might soon happen again, bringing with it the same reward.

At eight bells (4 A.M.), instead of turning in with the rest of the watch, I went to the galley

to fill the post of cook. Our cook had refused in Shanghai to do his duties any longer, being disgusted with the Chinaman steward, who was too wide awake for him, so he returned into the forecastle. Reed took his place; but, soon getting tired of the work, persuaded me to try my hand at it. Accordingly, as stated, I stepped into the galley at 4 A.M., and began lighting the fire, which for a whole hour obstinately refused to burn, and I was at my wits' end to know what to do, as I could get no coffee ready for the watch on deck at 5 o'clock as customary, and saw very little chance of being better prepared for the watch below at 7.20. Having filled my coppers from the water-casks on the main hatch, I went aft and got from Mr Turner the day's rations of pork,—Wednesday being one of the pork and pea-soup days. The galley, never very clean in bad weather, presented a sad spectacle of dirt and wild confusion, not a little added to by Reed while in office; seas were tumbling in through the lee doorway, and took a special delight in stopping in as long as they could, rising sometimes nearly to the fire. An ill-timed lurch

capsized the kid of pork, which I had been obliged to put up to windward to keep it from being washed away, and sent the pieces of pork spinning into a heap of cinders; and a sea sweeping in at the moment, playfully washed the lot round the galley under my despairing gaze. I collected the pork together, and stowed them away again in the kid, cinders and all, and then began peeling some potatoes that the steward brought for the captain; but one by one, as I peeled them, they rolled away on their own account, sometimes in the water and sometimes out, and seeing my inability to control them, I turned my attention to the water on the stove, which by this time had half ran away with the rolling of the ship. Tired of waiting for it to boil, I put in the coffee and sat on the coal-locker to let my legs and feet drip a bit. Perplexed as I felt as to how things would turn out, I could not help smiling at the ludicrous side of affairs in general. The pork-kid had again capsized, the pork recklessly chasing the kid from side to side, and the excitement of the scene well sustained by a couple of buckets frantically bent on banging anything anywhere.

As for the potatoes, they were having a fine time of it out on deck; indeed most of them had long since gone overboard. Presently seven bells were struck, and the watch below came for their coffee. I knew it was not nearly ready, and told them such was the case. Growling at the galley and the cook, they returned to the forecastle, partly satisfied with my assurance that the water would boil before eight bells. Nothing could make the water boil; not even handfuls upon handfuls of "shakings" (odd bits of ropes, canvas, spun-yarn, and rope-yarns, collected when sweeping decks, and put on one side for sale ashore). Eight bells at last came, and with them the hook-pots, which I filled with a good deal of splashing, endeavouring if possible to sink the coffee, which floated like so much dust. But it would not do. First one brought his back, then another, whilst several threatened to make me drink some myself. Then the steward came to know how the potatoes were cooking. Startled at the question, I stepped back, and the galley being for the moment free of water, trod on a hot coal just fallen from the grate with my bare

foot. This settled everything so far as I was concerned. Vowing I had had enough of the galley, I made off to the house, saying I did not care who succeeded me, but inwardly convinced that I had got well out of it. The A.B. whose resignation had caused all the muddle began to see things in a better light, and he forthwith became "doctor" again, eventually becoming a very good cook. This is the only time I ever acted as cook, upon which fact I might have equally congratulated myself and shipmates.

As the day advanced the weather cleared, and in the afternoon she was under her three top-gallant sails. The poor native passengers had had a sore time of it; the noise of the wind and sea, and rolling of the ship throughout the night, made them nearly all ill, but not sufficiently to deter them from their opium-smoking when the sky brightened up. During the first dog-watch we loosed the three royals, only a gentle breeze now blowing. Soon after we hauled her up, and stood in for the coast, which gradually became more distinct, showing a few vague lines of the mouth of the river

Min. We all stood or sat on the forecastle-head, watching the water as it changed from blue to green, and the old ship, as she playfully dipped her nose in, plunging, bouncing and rolling on towards land. The sun was setting in a clear sky, and neither ship nor crew looked any worse for the previous night's blow. The wind dying away as we neared the land, it was nine o'clock before we let go the anchor in the mouth of the river, after a fine run of thirty-two hours. Having furled the sails and coiled down the ropes, we went below and turned in.

After washing decks next morning we had breakfast, and then had nothing to do until the afternoon sea-breeze set in. The sun poured down its burning rays on the barren rocky hills around, and, save the one or two little fishing-boats which might be seen moving out of a distant nook, nothing stirred. At two o'clock the sea-breeze set in, and immediately all was hurry and scurry. The mate came forward: "Now then, men, man the windlass;" and, looking into the house, "and you boys lay aloft and loose those royals and top-gallant sails and topsails as you come down." "Ay, ay, sir;"

and we sprang up our respective rigging, each one anxious to get done first. The anchor was soon catheaded, and with every inch of canvas spread to catch the light breeze, we glided slowly up the river at first; but the wind shortly afterwards increasing, we bowled along at the rate of five or six knots against tide. At last we arrived at the wide open anchorage, and let go the anchors at about the same place as before—viz., abreast of Pagoda Island, 2d October.

It was dusk by the time we had finished stowing the sails, and the cold of a Chinese autumn began to make itself felt up aloft. Everything looked much the same as when we left a month ago. The same desolate mountains; the queer little island with its clusters of trees, showing here and there quaint bamboo houses; and they were nearly all the same ships in port,—the Duke of Abercorn, Belted Will, and Flintshire (steamer), being amongst them. The English gunboat Teazer lay in the same place, with her raking masts and "pea-soup" funnel showing off to advantage beside the Chinese gunboats, with their white funnels

tipped with black, big out of all proportion to the vessel's size; and being brig-rigged, French fashion, with ugly shears and worse sterns, they looked neither man-o'-war nor merchantmen.

The following morning we began unloading our native cargo, and we all wondered whether we should get a freight of tea home at last. We watched with anxious looks the "tea-chops" as they sailed down on their way to the Duke of Abercorn, loading for London. The Forward-Ho had left a week before for the same port (after being out from London two years); and the Carmarthenshire and Lord Macaulay were gradually filling up. About a week after our arrival, at nine o'clock in the evening, I was walking the deck, thinking over what chances we had of getting a cargo, when a small "house-boat" noisily bore up alongside. A native, armed with a lantern, sprang on deck, and hastily inquired for the captain. Coming out on deck, the native handed him a large envelope containing a letter, which he rapidly scanned. He returned to his cabin, wrote a note, and gave the same to the messenger, who

at once stepped back into the boat and shoved off. All this of course seemed very mysterious, and upon going forward, I was assailed with all kinds of questions concerning its meaning; but, knowing no more than they did, I could give no explanation beyond what we all more or less surmised. There could be no doubt but what it had something to do with the freight to come, and wild were the conjectures indulged in by many. Another day and we knew all. Our agents had sent down offering the captain a freight of tea for New York, and he had accepted it. Those who had been to the "States" before became leading men. They painted a tolerably gloomy picture of what we might expect in the North Atlantic in the depth of winter, saying it could only be compared to the Horn. But hard as the prospects were, we knew it to be on our way home, and that consoled us considerably.

Reed, who had been acting steward since leaving Shanghai, with a young Chinaman under him, got into hot water with the captain one evening, which ended in his being discharged from office. In laying the tea-things

in the cuddy, the Chinaman refused to do something or other; and when told by Reed that he must, he turned "cheeky." The consequence was, Reed "plugged" him in the eye, besides nearly knocking two front teeth out. When the Chinaman related his tale to the captain, he sent for Reed, told him he need not enter the pantry again, and "mast-headed" him there and then, to await his pleasure before coming down. Without thinking of the cold evenings, he went up and took his seat on the main-royal yard, with only a Crimean shirt on his back, and as the sun was then setting, the air felt anything but sultry. Being the first one "mast-headed" since leaving London, it was looked upon much like a novelty, and several of us stood making signs and interchanging grins with him till dark. At nine o'clock it was proposed that some one should take him up his pilot-jacket and some grub, which I undertook to do. Slipping on his coat, one pocket filled with soft-tack and meat, and the other with a bottle containing some grog, I carefully ascended the main rigging, so as not to attract the attention of the second mate, who

was walking the poop. I found him fast asleep, having lashed himself to the mast with the buntlines. He was very glad of what I had brought up, but wondered whether the captain would make him remain there all night. A little before ten the mate came out with orders from the captain for him to come down.

CHAPTER XI.

DEATH OF THE CAPTAIN.

We had now been in port a week, and the native cargo from Shanghai was all discharged. We had cleared up the hold, levelled the ballast, and already had some two hundred half-chests of Oolongs stowed away; I being made tallyman. As the chests leave the lighter or "chop," a small bamboo stick is wedged in between the cane lashings. This the tallyman withdraws just before they slide into the hold, and when he has collected one hundred he makes an entry in his tally-book, and returns the bamboos from whence they came.

The 10th October was a great day for Turner; his indentures then expired, and he was no more an apprentice. Having to go to the British

Consulate to get his indentures cancelled, he obtained permission from the mate to take the quarter-boat and two hands, and after breakfast he shoved off for the shore. Shortly after, without any cause or reason save a craving for drink, the mate hailed a sampan, and also made for the shore, leaving us to take care of ourselves, which we forthwith did by knocking off whatever work we were at, and going below for a smoke. The captain, who had never left the deck whilst coming down from Shanghai, had been unwell ever since; and having lately received another reproachful letter from the owners in London, accusing him of negligence for not having obtained a cargo before, had been greatly worried by it, and at last was obliged to keep to his bed, where he lay, on the day in question, totally ignorant of what took place on deck.

We were finishing dinner when we heard a boat hail us, and running on deck we saw a sight anything but edifying. Two men-o'-war's-men from the Teazer, happening to be ashore, had brought back our quarter-boat with our two men dead drunk in the stern-sheets, and

Turner only a shade better, being able to climb on deck without assistance. Having hauled the other two aboard, one staggered into the fore-castle and was put into his bunk, whilst the other rolled into our house, and soon dropped off into a heavy sleep on our chests. From what we could gather from Turner, they had met the mate, and the two men having got drunk, commenced a furious fight with him (he being in much the same condition), until separated and dragged into the boat by the two men-o'-war's-men, who happened to be passing at the time. Mr Turner very quietly went aft and turned in. Half-an-hour afterwards the mate came aboard mad-drunk. He rolled to our end of the ship and inquired for the two men, but before we could answer him he reeled into the house, and seeing the man Cogwell asleep, roused him up and asked what business he had in the apprentices' berth. Receiving no reply, he grew furious and threatened to turn him out. This was enough. Cogwell, a big, heavy-limbed Scotchman, sprang from off the chest where he had been lying, and seized Mr Mason by the throat—a man of no mean size or

strength either—and a savage fight ensued between these two drunken men. They stumbled out on deck, and there continued; but the hands, who until now had been mere lookers-on without a word, then interfered and dragged the two apart. The mate looked dreadful; he had got the worst of it. The blood poured down his clothes from his head and face, while Cogwell was not recognisable for swellings and bruises. He worked his way to his berth as best he could, and thus ended one of the most disgraceful sights I have ever witnessed at sea. Mr Mason was a drunken fellow, totally unfit for his position as mate of a fine clipper-ship, and commanded no respect from one end of the vessel to the other. If such had not been the case, things might have turned out very different. It is the apprentices' duty to stand by the officers, and assist them under any circumstances; and, moreover, a mate who keeps his place, and makes others keep theirs, and altogether behaves as the chief officer of a ship should, would always have the majority of the crew at his back ready to support his authority at any time.

The tea came down but slowly. One day would see perhaps 200 to 250 half-chests stowed away in the hold, while the following day and the next to that would pass away without any "chop" coming alongside. Each tea "chop" carries the flag of its shipping house, so that whenever one hove in sight with its huge mat sail, we could tell at once to what vessel she was bound. The time occupied in loading a ship with tea in Foo-chow ranges from a fortnight to two months and even more. Fortunately we were in no great hurry, as the later we sailed the weather would be less severe for New York.

But news of the gravest importance began to spread in the ship. The captain was daily growing worse. No one was allowed on the poop, lest the sound of the footsteps might disturb him; and very little work was carried on, the orders being given in an undertone. His illness had settled in brain fever, and the doctor came aboard twice a-day. A week passed by and he still declined. Everybody walked about as quietly as possible; jokes were thrust aside, and the only topic of conversation was the state

of the captain. At last it was rumoured that, should he recover, he never again could command the ship. The older seamen shook their heads and swore if the mate ever became master of the ship they would rather be put in "choky" than sail under him.

One evening as I was washing to go ashore, having been invited by Mr B—— (head man of T—— & Co., ship-chandlers) to tea, "Chips" came into the house saying Mrs F—— wished particularly to see me, adding that it was to help her in watching over the captain. I packed my clean things away again and went aft. A sadder sight could not be imagined, and at first I thought my eyes saw falsely. In shocking contrast to his former manliness, gentlemanly bearing, and mild yet determined expression, there now sat a maniac, hideous in feature and in movement, foaming at the mouth. Poor Mrs F—— sat beside him on the bed in tears, coaxing him to lie down and be quiet; but his glassy eyes stared into space—his brain had lost all power. She begged of me to remain by the captain, saying it would relieve her to have some one to talk to. As day by day passed

away, so did our last hope; the worse symptoms set in, and his end was evidently drawing near. The doctor came as usual—twice, and sometimes three times a-day—but he now despairingly said he could do no more. His wife was exceedingly kind to Mrs F——, bringing aboard jellies, custards, and fruit, and staying with her the greater part of the day. The captain, with a strange obscured voice, frequently muttered words; and, vague and disconnected though they were, yet they referred but to one subject—the ship. One morning at daybreak he sprang to the port, which was open, and thrust his arms out, anxiously inquiring why we did not put into St Helena; and it was only after considerable difficulty that he was quieted. The nights were most lonely and wearisome. Mrs F——, after the doctor had left—generally about nine—retired to an adjoining cabin, where she contrived sometimes to get a little sleep on some chests, leaving me to look after the captain till daybreak, when I had some breakfast and a couple of hours' sleep. However, towards evening of the 29th November he gesticulated and fought less, and, as night wore on, became al-

most motionless. The wind was blowing wildly outside, and seemed to harmonise thoroughly with our feelings. He breathed regularly, but under effort, and his eyes had not moved since the night set in. Convinced that he had but a very short time to live, I fetched "Chips" and Turner that they might be present. His feet and hands were stone cold, and his nails were turning black, while the heat was slowly leaving his body. At twenty minutes past seven on the morning of the 30th October he gave three long-drawn sighs. "He is dead," said Turner, as he straightened his arms and closed his eyes.

His widow, in mournful anticipation, had occupied herself during the night in laying out such clean linen as might be necessary. As I crossed the quarter-deck on my way to the galley for a bucket of hot water to wash his body, I met the mate, who, when he heard the news, burst into hypocritical sobs and tears, and sang out for M'Ewan to hoist the ensign half-mast high. To a stranger his grief would have appeared very great; but we knew him too well. With hot water, soap, and flannel, Turner and I undertook this last task. Hav-

ing dressed his body in clean underclothing, and covered it with a white sheet, we left the cabin, after pinning a handkerchief over the port. All the ships lowered their ensigns out of respect. When I went for'ard I found the men silently looking over their chests or smoking. There being no position ashore whereby to draw a parallel with that of a sea-captain, it would be difficult to describe a crew's feelings at his loss. He is everything, and has the power to do nearly anything, whether for good or evil. If on the wide ocean, implicit confidence is placed in his navigation reckonings by every one, nobody casting a doubt upon his skill; a man breaks his leg or arm, and the captain is immediately applied to to put it right; the mate, second mate, or steward may either of them understand more thoroughly the treatment of that particular accident, but Jack puts his faith in the "cap'en." Poor Captain F—— was a conscientious man, always studying to equally please owners and crew—no easy work, their interests at times running very contrary.

In the evening the coffin came aboard, and

half-a-dozen of us succeeded in placing him in; but there being no space for it in the cabin, we left it in the cuddy, on the table, with the lid off. His limbs were as stiff as iron, and decomposition had already set in, as the tainted atmosphere plainly proved. It was a mournful evening aboard; no laughing or joking could be heard. The men in the forecastle lay about on their chests and in their bunks, either smoking or reading; and if perchance somebody interrupted the other in his thoughts by broaching a topic of conversation, it found no favour, and the speaker was gradually silenced.

The Foo-chow branch of our agents in China, the large house of Messrs J—— M—— & Co., behaved in a very kindly spirit throughout. Their steam-launch and "house-boat" came alongside at half-past seven next morning (Friday), to convey the body to Foo-chow city to be buried. The English cemetery—a small plot of ground surrounded by a wall, with a chapel in the centre—nearly adjoins the native burial-ground, which lies between it and the few houses constituting the European quarter. At eight o'clock the lid was screwed down, and

covered with our merchant white-bordered Union-Jack. The coffin was brought from the cuddy to the quarter-deck, and lowered through the port into the house-boat, where it was laid on deck in the cabin fore and aft. Mr Mason (with his eyes still black, and looking painfully comical) and Mr Turner then stepped aboard, the rest of the ship's company following. All being ready, we cast off, and the natives in charge having hoisted the huge sail, with the ensign half-mast, dipping in the water over the stern, we rapidly slid through the river, and, so long as it remained wide and open, keeping well ahead of the launch, which, however, proved very useful in towing us from under the lee of the mountains, where we repeatedly got becalmed. Everybody had put on his best clothes, with such signs of mourning as could be procured; we apprentices in our uniform suits, but with the band and badge on our caps concealed beneath crape or cloth. I had as yet never been up to Foo-chow city, and so employed my time watching the scenery. In consequence of the "carrying on," the lee side of the cabin filled with water, and we were

obliged to remove the coffin on to the weather seat. We arrived at our agents' jetty at noon: the two heads of the firm here, Messrs H—— and C. L—— coming down to meet us at the landing-stairs. The river here is very narrow, and swarms with junks, large and small, besides an endless variety of other craft. Messrs J—— M—— & Co.'s business house, or rather mansion, is a fine structure, standing in well-laid-out grounds. We were at first going to carry the coffin slung in ropes, but the above gentlemen having procured a bier, helped us considerably. Supported by eight men shoulder-high, and the others following, we moved steadily on towards the English cemetery, distant about a mile and a half. Part of our road led through the city itself, with its dirty narrow thoroughfares, and so crowded that several times our burden was nearly knocked to the ground by the people wilfully jostling us. In passing through a lane narrower than any other, and flanked on each side by a wall, we had to carry the coffin over our heads at arm's-length; but, from our awkward position, it came into contact with either wall so violently

that, had it not been strongly put together, it certainly would have broken to pieces. At last we emerged on open land, sandy and grassy by turns. The sun now made himself felt in earnest, burning and scorching with uncontrolled power, until the groups of trees on the Chinese burial-ground mitigated his fury.

This was the most wretched and tedious part of our journey; a succession of sickening sights presenting themselves to our view. Everywhere were huts, bamboo or thatched, sheltering one, two, three, or more coffins. A few, which apparently were new, held together; but the vast majority had long since fallen away, and, as they were not interred in the earth, but raised above it a couple of feet, the decaying bones and putrid bodies were exposed to the gaze of the passer-by. In charge of these dead bodies were whole families, paid by the relatives and friends to ward off the evil spirits. Born in the tombs, brought up among the dead, fed on foul air and miserable food, these wretched beings pass through life. Keepers and kept are equally dead to the world; their bed is

beside a corpse, and their only thought is concerning it.

I breathed more freely when, following the pathway up some hills, we left the foul air of this ghastly region behind. We soon after entered the English cemetery, and having deposited the coffin in the chapel to await interment at sunset, we returned in loose order to the house, where a liberal and almost sumptuous tiffin had been provided for men and officers. A spacious room on the ground-floor was set apart for the men, while the officers, with the apprentices, were invited to Mr H——'s table in a splendid dining-room on the first floor. The *menu* was faultless, and did ample justice to their hospitality. Wine, in any quantity and of any kind, circulated round, and helped materially to gladden all hearts, notwithstanding our sepulchral mission. Mr C. L—— kept up a regular volley of witty remarks throughout the feast; for a feast it certainly was to us hungry tars. Course after course followed, until dessert came and cigars, when we adjourned down-stairs again. The men, who looked all the jollier for their repast, were

quietly smoking cigars in the gardens, and it must be said to their credit, everybody sober. Mr C. L——, full of fun, and anxious that we should enjoy ourselves, but perhaps rather forgetful of our day's duty and its sad calling, led all hands into an adjoining field, where a fine donkey was grazing. He was soon caught, and several men were persuaded to ride him in turn; and being of a frisky nature, with a marked tendency to suddenly elevate his hind-quarters and balance himself on his fore-legs, his unhappy riders had numerous falls, causing general laughter. But the best was yet to come. One of the native men-servants happening to be looking on—a man of say thirty years, face of true Chinese type, expression of feature conspicuous by its absence—he was "nailed," and when no one else would venture, was *bon gré mal gré* seated on the donkey's back, who immediately started off at a gallop, amidst a host of cries and yells; many joyful shrieks coming from his own countrymen, who, Chinaman-fashion, went into ecstasies of delight in seeing one of their own race and kind in trouble. The animal dragged the unfortunate Celestial

through branch and bush, until, emerging on clear ground again, he gave two or three wild kicks, which ended by landing our friend awkwardly on the grass, accompanied by roars of laughter from the lookers-on.

Mr W——, one of the clerks here, having proposed to show M'Ewan, Reed, and me round the neighbouring streets and quarter of Foochow city, we gladly availed ourselves of his offer, and set off at about 3 P.M. I noticed some difference between this city and Hong-Kong: a city laid out on semi-European plans, the thoroughfares being divided into roads and pathways. Here, as in all Chinese towns proper, goods and merchandise are carried by men, slung on a stout bamboo—carts, &c., being unknown. The streets are only used by pedestrians, and are merely a rough path or roadway paved with large and small rugged stones, and, like all Eastern towns, very narrow; so much so, in fact, that after going some distance I asked our friend Mr W—— if our course would be much further in these back slums and alleys, and was quite taken aback when he informed me that the dirty little lane we were

then traversing was one of the principal streets of the city of Foo-chow.

A European cannot fail to be struck, when first visiting China, with the immense antiquity stamped directly and indirectly upon everything. Turning a corner, we meet a crowd listening attentively to an old man who is calling upon the youth of the empire to imitate their forefathers, to follow in the footsteps of heroes who lived not hundreds but thousands of years ago. The Chinese never look forward, they always look back; seeking no other knowledge than that which their ancestors possessed, and striving to do but as they did. The men are small in size and slightly made. Their arms and legs are so thin and void of muscle that they appear more like children's than men's limbs; and it is nothing uncommon to see amongst the lower classes the most delicately-shaped hands and wrists, such as many a European lady might well long for. Their physical strength is far below ours; and however different the case may be in Australia and California, where many have of late emigrated, they are badly off as regards energy.

We crossed the bridge, an old stone structure of many arches, through which the tide swept with great rapidity. I should think not more than four persons could walk abreast between the parapets. This bridge is the longest one in China; and a curious legend is attached to it, which may be of interest, if only to show the grotesque character of the Chinese imagination, which has no conception for the beautiful or the sublime, but only for the weird and the horrible. To judge by the legendary description, one would fancy the river Min at Foo-chow to equal an arm of the sea at least, instead of being only a very ordinary stream, and of no great depth.

On a certain day many, many years ago, a vessel was preparing to cross the river Min: there were to be a number of passengers, besides a valuable cargo, and everything augured well. But in their watery abodes at the bottom of the Min the river-devils were in high glee. They were the spirits of the people drowned from time to time in their endeavours to cross the troubled surface. The news had reached them that a large ship was about attempting

the passage, and knowing what little chance it had, they were mightily pleased, as for every man drowned so, a soul was released from these hideous depths, taking their turn by seniority. The river-devils had it in their power to stir up the treacherous water; but this was counterbalanced by the land fairies, whose special mission consisted in watching over human lives. On the night previous to the sailing, one of them appeared in a dream to the captain, and told him that a great storm would rage, but if a man named A Choi was among the passengers, the peril would be averted. As A Choi was described as a literary man, he would be easily distinguishable from the rest of the passengers, who were mostly of the lower classes. The following day, when the passengers came aboard, the captain stood in the gangway and carefully noted every individual. The last one passed by, but still none answered in any way to the description given. The captain grew agitated, and determined upon inquiring among those aboard whether a person of the name of A Choi was with them, but without success. One old woman was certainly

married to a man of that name; but that mattered little to the captain, who must necessarily have had him aboard, even supposing him a literary man. At last the time came for starting: the hawsers were cast off, the sails hoisted to the merry songs of the sailors, and the ship filled away before a gentle breeze. The sky was clear and the water smooth; and everything looked so peaceful and calm that the captain soon recovered his spirits, laughing at his credulity in putting faith in a troublesome dream. Unfortunately his felicity was soon cut short by the appearance of huge black clouds; and as the breeze freshened, so sail had to be reduced. The river, too, which a minute before had been so treacherously smooth, now rose into high waves; and as the wind rose high, so his courage sank low. Presently the storm burst around with awful might, and the captain, in a fit of despair, cried out, "*We are lost!*" But in doing so he cast his eyes on the woman who had married one A Choi, and instantly a thought passed through his mind. "Pray for us!" he exclaimed: "if your husband is not literary, your son may one day be so." She

immediately knelt down, and vowed that if their lives should be spared, and she should in after-time bring forth a son, in his name she solemnly promised to build a bridge over the river. The wild wind suddenly dropped, the clouds cleared off, and the waves settled down. They were delivered. A short time after this event, she brought into the world a son; and when she related to her husband her extraordinary adventure, he resolved that no endeavour should be spared in fulfilling the vow. They saved all the money they could, and had their son carefully instructed in all the polite arts; and being a remarkably intelligent lad, he passed all the examinations with the highest honours. But after all, they found all his learning availed him nothing towards the great work; in fact there was nothing he was so entirely ignorant of as building a bridge. They were well aware the authorities would laugh at them as mad if they applied for money. Convinced that their only chance lay in praying to heaven, the woman went to the nearest temple, and besought the Supreme Spirit to help her. The prayer was not without effect. The beauti-

ful and kind-hearted goddess, touched with compassion, hastened to the celestial sovereign to be allowed to visit the earth, and had her request at once granted. She descended with her suite invisible to mortal eyes, and alighted in a boat moored in the river off the city of Foo-chow. The news spread rapidly round the town that a most charming maiden had come to be married, which intention she made known by writing it in large characters on a board at the end of the boat. Her mother, who had accompanied her, then made it known to the concourse of spectators, that whoever should hit a delicate teacup, placed on her daughter's head, with a coin, should be allowed to marry her: her dowry to consist of all the money thrown into the boat before the cup was broken. Day by day the trial went on in quick succession; and although all the young men of Foo-chow were there, none succeeded. Just as the goddess was considering the advisibility of ending the play of coins, which was now nearly sinking the boat, a youth was induced to attempt a throw. He had been looking on with interest all along, but was restrained by his

excessive bashfulness. At his first aim he struck the teacup and smashed it into a hundred pieces. She beckoned to him to go in the boat; and having given him all the money to build the bridge with, she vanished, after promising him an architect. The genii of the Fiery Star was sent to earth, where he assumed the form of an old man, and gave some valuable hints to A Choi on the architecture required. "You have no suitable stone," said he; "go to Canton and find out the Dragon of Goodness, he will satisfy your wants." After wasting many a weary day looking for him, he found the kindly monster, who gave him a bottle containing ninety pills, closely sealed down, and which he was not to open till he got back. Their purpose was for building the foundations; and in his enthusiasm he leaped with joy. Unfortunately, on his way down the Canton river, inquisitiveness took possession of him: he opened the bottle and took out a pill, which every moment grew larger. Frightened, he threw it in the river; but it increased in size at such an extraordinary rate, that it soon rose above the surface of the water. But A

Choi, remembering an old charm, marked it on a piece of wood, and throwing it at the expanding mass, hit it. It grew no more, but remains unto this day a hideous rock in the middle of the stream. Arriving in Foo-chow, the old man severely blamed him for losing a pill, as there were ninety foundations to build, and the pills had only to be thrown in the river to complete the rest themselves. Only eighty-nine remaining, he would have to build one himself, which he thought a hopeless task. At last the old man informed him that by applying to the Great Marine Dragon living in the depths of the Min, the waters would be drained off for a day. A large supply of stone having been collected, the Great Marine Dragon laid dry the bed of the river, and during this time the foundations of the last arch was successfully laid. And thus A Choi built the bridge. From its indestructible material and imposing appearance, his mother called it "*The Bridge of Ten Thousand Ages*," which name it retains to the present day.

We got back at four o'clock, and at half-past we all started for the cemetery to do our last

duty to our late captain. The Union-Jack was disarranged; and it was noticed that one of the screws in the lid was half out, which we knew not to have been the case when we left the coffin there earlier in the day. However, no one passed a remark, although all of the same thought, as we subsequently found out. We quietly took our seats while the carpenter secured the lid again. The clergyman then read the burial service, and we carried the coffin to its grave. Several friends of our late captain assisted, one being an old schoolfellow of his, holding some mercantile post in Foochow. The natives who filled the grave up, instead of shovelling the earth in, filled little baskets, which they carried to and fro—a process which took three times as long. I came away last, and hastened to rejoin the others on their way to the house. The topic of conversation was with reference to that screw half out. It was an undoubted sign that some wretched natives had been at the coffin to strip the corpse of its clothing; whether successful or not in their attempt it was impossible to say now. Several blamed the carpenter for not

unscrewing the lid completely to ascertain, but "Chips" very naturally replied that such a thought never entered his mind. A large olive-tree overhung the grave of Captain F——, who, only a few weeks ago, was hale and hearty. Little did any of us think when we left Shanghai that in sailing for Foo-chow he was sailing to his grave.

After depositing the coffin in the chapel, I took a stroll round the cemetery, reading the epitaphs on the tombstones. One marked the last resting-place of a captain's wife who died on a passage from Australia to Foo-chow; another, the second officer of the screw-steamer Volunteer, aged 25, who died at Pagoda anchorage in 1865; and a strange coincidence of rank, age, and vessel, occurs in a slab to the memory of the second engineer, aged 25, of the screw-steamer Volunteer, who died in 1867 at the same place. Passing on, I came to the grave of an unhappy midshipman of H.M.S. Acorn, drowned at the anchorage whilst bathing. These, with about a dozen devoted to residents, complete the number of graves in the English cemetery of Foo-chow. Having had a good tea, we walked

down to the quay, and went aboard the house-boat again. Mr W——, just as we left table, took up a pot of jam, and stuffed it in one of Reed's pockets, much to the latter's delight.

We had no end of trouble in shoving off. Mr C. L——, with a mistaken view to saving trouble, had paid our boatmen in advance—two dollars apiece. Of course, having got their money, they wanted to make off, and as our boat touched this and that craft, they tried hard to run away; but at last, Jack Anderson, a Swede of determined character, threatened to heave the next "son of a bitch" overboard that he caught trying to escape. They quietly went about their duty after this, and being a fine moonlight night, with a strong breeze, we steadily glided down the river. But it was not all smooth sailing. Getting under the lee of a hill, our canvass hung loosely down the mast, with not a breath of air stirring. Then our lazy boatmen had to man the oars—a task undertaken with the worst possible grace. We sat in the cabin talking over the day's events. Reed was in a corner eating his pot of jam with his fingers, looking very ill and inflated. We

had some narrow escapes in emerging from a dead calm and meeting the strong gusts of wind. Several times we rushed on deck, expecting her to go on her beam-ends. Our little coloured able-seaman, Phillips, had his coat and boots off, ready for jumping overboard at a moment's notice; and as a sudden blast bore the lee side of the deck under water, a quantity of which poured down into the cabin, he sprang up the companion-ladder, and remained there for the rest of the journey. We arrived alongside the ship at half-past eleven.

Mrs F—— had gone to the doctor's house on the morning of the funeral, where she had been invited to stay a few days. Two or three days after the above ceremony, the doctor placed his house-boat at her disposal for the purpose of viewing her husband's grave, which I took charge of, with the mate's permission. Having arrived at our agents' jetty, I conducted Mrs F—— to a lady friend's house. We were met on the way by Mr C. L——, who invited me to tiffin with the gentlemen of the firm. While he and I were washing our hands in his room, a gentleman walked in, and shaking hands

with him, was introduced to me as Captain H—— of H.M.S. Teazer. I felt a little shaky at being in the presence of a naval officer, and a captain at that; but I soon found him to be a very affable person. Captain M—— of the screw-steamer Dragon, plying on the coast, was also at table. As H.M.S. Teazer had only returned from a cruise outside the day before, Captain H—— had, until then of course, been ignorant of our loss. He expressed his grief at the death; for, besides knowing him personally, he had met our late captain officially in the rank he held of sub-lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve. We returned in the evening to the anchorage, and having left Mrs F—— at the doctor's house, I got back to the ship at about eight o'clock. Early next morning she embarked in the Thetis (s.s.), bound for London.

We had finished loading over a week. The hatches were on and battened down, and tarpaulins stretched over; and the cuddy, all but a little space at the fore-end, where the table was for the captain and officers to dine, was full of chests of tea. Mr Mason was not to take command of the ship, the agents had

wisely decided. A captain had been found in Shanghai, from whence he was daily expected, who had consented to take charge of the Sea Queen. We were very glad to hear this; but what sort of a man he would be, became our next thought.

Sailors are very lavish in their expenditure on "curios" for their friends and sweethearts. Jack does not obtain for nothing the strange wares and curious objects which he so carefully brings across the seas from far-off lands. On the contrary, I always found collecting "curios" a very expensive undertaking, particularly in China. Little fancy pagodas, carved out of soapstone, are always in great demand, and are sold at fifty cents to a dollar, according to size. Camphor-wood chests are also much inquired for, and as readily supplied, varnished, at two to four dollars. Their neat workmanship, finished off with characteristic minuteness, has a peculiar charm for sailors. If they were only as useful as ornamental, they would not be dear; but unfortunately the wood, as a rule, warps to such an extent as to start the lid and open the sides. Then damp is quickly attracted

by them, which soon destroys the clothes; and besides, they are never calculated for the rough wear and tear of a forecastle. Several of our men bought them, but sorely repented their purchases afterwards. I have seen miniature tea-plants in pots offered for sale at twenty-five cents. A great trade is carried on also in Japanese cabinets.

Since the death of the captain we seemed a different crew. The men went about their work without growling, and the apprentices in their respective turns hauled down the ensign from the flagstaff and the house-flag into the main-top at sunset, without being summoned beforehand two or three times. The days, too, were drawing in, and the nights grew cold, so that we were glad to turn into our bunks of an evening, and enjoy a quiet smoke and a yarn by lamplight.

Thursday, 6th November.—This afternoon the agents' house-boat brought the captain aboard, accompanied by Mr W——, who introduced him to Mr Mason and Mr Turner, and showed him his state-room and quarters. We stood by the break of the forecastle, keenly eying our future

captain, a man of medium height, with sandy moustache and whiskers, inclined to be red. When Mr W—— came into the house soon after to wish us good-bye and a pleasant voyage, as he should not come down to the ship again, we assailed him with all sorts of questions concerning the character of our new commander, Captain S——. He said he was a very quiet man, though inclined for a joke now and then, and that he was well liked by all who had served under him on the coast, where he had been for the last fifteen years in command of steamers. He now availed himself of this opportunity to return home with a view to building a fine steamer in England which he intended to bring out again to China, and sail on his own account. One could plainly see he liked good living by the quantity of provisions which came aboard the next day. Preserves of all kinds, two casks of bottled beer, besides a quantity of fresh meat and vegetables, enough to last all hands a week from leaving port. The hencoops, too, on the poop were filled with four dozen fowls, and four sheep were put in the pen on the fore-hatch, which, together with the fat

pig, held out good prospects for the future. A cask of bottled pickles also came aboard for the cabin and for'ard. After an hour's stay, during which time he came no further for'ard than the mainmast, he gave orders to the mate to have the ship ready to proceed to sea on Saturday morning; and placing in charge of the steward two native dogs, totally black, even to their tongues, he left us and returned to Foochow city again, where he was staying at the agents. And so we knew at least when we should sail—an event long looked forward to. Every week had appeared to us like a month in this miserable place, made, if possible, more wretched still by the mists and keen winds of approaching winter.

Saturday, 8th November.—Captain S—— came aboard in his official capacity; and in the afternoon we manned the windlass, weighed anchor, and dropped down below the shipping, ready for towing down early next morning. We could fire no salute, as our only gun, an iron 6-pounder, had baffled all attempts to remove the tough iron pin with which it was spiked. Seeing its uselessness on deck, it had been stowed in the hold

as part ballast. In the evening the last of our sea provisions came aboard, consisting of four little native pigs.

Sunday, 2 A.M.—Before daybreak we were roused out to heave up the anchor. This time we had not the trouble of dropping down, backing and filling, wearing ourselves out in order to save the owners a few dollars. A steam-tug took us in tow, and as the wind was fair the captain ordered the staysails to be loosed. Some discontent prevailed amongst the men because no second mate or boatswain had been shipped, the only extra hand to make up for these deficiences being a sickly-looking little lascar, ordinary seaman, who came straight from prison, where he had been detained somewhat unjustly for running away from his last ship—a German—on account of ill-treatment. The English Consul, in a grim, ironical mood, charged him with his month's imprisonment by drawing one month of his pay to come—£2. He had neither chest nor bedding, and only possessed what he stood in. The reason we had neither second mate nor boatswain was, no doubt, that they could not be obtained; conse-

quently Turner still held his post as acting second mate—an office, perhaps, he knew well enough how to fill, although having been only lately an apprentice, and having of course had no opportunity as yet of passing the Board of Trade examinations, the men but half obeyed his orders, whilst several refused to "sir" him. This was not a very satisfactory state of things at the beginning of our long journey to the other side of the world; but the fact of our leaving China, and particularly Foo-chow—a place, as George said, forgotten when the world was being made, and therefore hastily formed afterwards out of the refuse and rubbish—helped to smooth matters down. It being low tide when we reached the mouth of the river, we came to anchor till noon, when we hove up for the last time in Chinese waters, and in tow of the steam-tug we stood out to sea.

CHAPTER XII.

WESTWARD HO!

Sunday, 9th November.—A fresh wind was blowing off the land, so orders were given to loose all sail. Just as I was loosing the upper mizzen-topsail, I heard a sharp thud, and feeling the mast quiver, saw that the hawser had parted—as it did more than a year before off the Nore—this time carrying away near to where it was made fast to the bitts on the forecastle-head, so that we lost the greater part of the old hawser, a new one having been bought before leaving port. We did not take the trouble to make fast again: all sail was soon set; and, a stiffish breeze blowing, we bade farewell to the tug, which, sinking and rising on the green water, turned her head landwards, apparently happy at

returning home so soon. Towards five o'clock the pilot left us, and we found ourselves once more bounding away on the ocean; the green waves already giving way to the dark blue transparency of the deep sea. Nobody felt sorry at leaving China. We had been on the coast five months; and if there is one thing above all others which is particularly hateful to a "blue-water" sailor, it is coasting. Accustomed to a regular clockwork routine of life, he dislikes clearing out of port one day and sailing in the next, with its consequent dirty work and untidy decks; besides the trouble and difficulty to him of navigating along shore, implying double vigilance at the "wheel" and "look-out;" he finds time for nothing without his usual "watch and watch": clothes do not get mended, nor buttons sewn on. The feeling may be more easily understood when the case is mentioned of a countryman who looks forward to spending a week in London, but who, after a few days, soon tires of the bustle, noise, excitement, and high-pressure living of a large town, and is glad in the end to return to the systematic life of his quiet country village—

monotonous if you will, but gradual and steady in its course.

No other profession in the world is so associated with romance and reckless happiness in the ideal; no other can surpass it in the amount of hardship and privation entailed in reality. Jack ashore and Jack afloat are two different animals. People forget when they see a sailor ashore that he is on a holiday, and free to so remain so long as his money lasts. Holiday life not being the normal condition of any man's existence, should not be taken as a standing-point from whence to judge his character. Dibdin and others have written scores of songs on Jack's merry life at sea, emanating from a fertile imagination only. I am ignorant of how they go down with navy tars, but merchant sailors hail them with derisive laughter. It is believed by land-folks that sailors have nothing to do at sea. They sleep in peaceful innocence all night, and lounge on deck round the mainmast all day; occupying the voyage by spinning yarns and singing briny songs. As the ship is supposed, like a little model steamer, to have her helm adjusted at the angle that

will take her straight to the port she is bound for; so the captain and mates have no trouble concerning navigation, their chief duty lying in keeping the sailors supplied with grog. Their throats are scorched by the tropical sun under which the vessel is always sailing. In order to season the pleasures of singing and drinking, which would otherwise become insipid, a pirate holds himself in readiness to appear on the horizon, during some period of the voyage, to hoist his black flag and engage in battle, and in due course to be, both ship and crew, swept off the surface of the sea. Obliging pirate! you may exclaim; not at all—it was simply a duty he owed to the generous British tars. The weather is put to no end of inconvenience in consequence of the wind always blowing in the direction the ship wants to go, and always at the same pressure. Marryat has sent more boys to sea than any training ship. But how different a picture the reality is! Clad in his tarry and greasy clothes, he goes about his work day by day, week by week, month by month, with the everlasting expanse of ocean around him meeting the sky. Fair weather or

foul, he must be on deck every alternate four hours day and night. "Saturday night at sea" is like any other night, unless, indeed, exception be made for the decks, and sundry articles of wearing apparel hanging about drying after their respective washings. As regards pirates and other sensational encounters, the former have been extinct for many years, unless we reckon the occasional Chinese junk hovering amongst its native islands, which is honoured with the title; the latter are limited to sharks and flying-fish. It is needless to say that the sea-serpent is only known to land-people, who find no difficulty in monopolising the arguments thereon.

Being the N.E. monsoon we sailed along under square yards, going about nine knots, although occasionally the wind took an unsteady fit, causing us to haul the yards for'ard once or twice. We were fortunate in not having to beat down against the S.W. monsoon, which blows the other part of the year. In one case the run is calculated in days, in the other in weeks. The first question a sailor asks on sailing under a new captain is, "Does

he carry on'?" If the answer is in the affirmative, he is satisfied; if the contrary, he treats him inwardly with considerable contempt. Blue-water sailors like blue-water voyages, but quick passages. Ships win a reputation through the "driving" qualities of their skippers, which go far in counterbalancing other grievances. On this ground I have heard several men praise the Deerhound, whose captain they called "old Jock," and the old Red Jacket—the latter especially. Captain F—— was a timid man, not bodily, but in his fear of carrying away sails or masts, and displeasing owners. Captain S—— was not much better, but from a different cause. Having been so many years in steamers, his new duties were somewhat strange to him under sail, which want of experience told severely upon the discipline of the ship eventually. Steam officers and seamen are far less fit to ship in sailing vessels than men from the latter to ship in steamers: "steamboat" captains understand but indifferently the management of sailing ships, and "steamboat" sailors are generally considered as only capable

of cleaning brass and scrubbing paintwork, or any other work under the category of "sand and canvas." It is common for a man to say, in a temporary fit of disgust with his seafaring life, making him none the less humorous: "I'll knock off the sea and go in a steamboat."

The weather kept, on the whole, fine; and as day after day passed by, things were got into sea order: chafing-gear put on stays and backstays; the running-gear overhauled, spliced, or renewed; and the harness-casks lashed and secured on the quarter-deck. During our watches below we greased our sea-boots, painted our oilskins, and otherwise prepared for all kinds of weather. Nothing of much interest occurred: an island, destitute of animal or vegetable life, with which this part of the China sea abounds, might be passed, or a native junk might heave in sight; but in other respects nothing relieved the monotony. The monsoon carried us down to 6° N., when we met the usual obstacles in crossing the equator. Light winds, calms, a gale of wind, then a steady breeze for half an hour, followed by a sudden shaking fore and aft of the sails—the clews and

iron chains of the topsail sheets making themselves heard above the rest; everything aback. As we haul the yards round on the other tack, torrents of rain fall; half the hands leave the braces to fetch oilskins, and put tubs to collect the water pouring off the forecastle-head and poop. With our diminished number we cannot get the fore-yard round. "Watch her as she rolls," sings out the second mate (I was still in the starboard watch), and the yard swings as fast as we can haul the slack of the brace in. By the time we have braced the yards up, a calm has set in. It stops raining, although the sky is everywhere overcast with dark leaden clouds. We are told not to coil the ropes down, but to leave them along the decks as they are ready for running. The sails hang dripping down the masts, and each time a roll causes the sails to flap with a loud noise, the mainsail, which has been hauled up, discharges bucketfuls of water on deck from its folds. The captain anxiously walks the poop, now and then stopping to look through his glasses at some part of the horizon more threatening than the rest. At last a breeze

springs up, to be succeeded again in the same rotation as before.

We had two days of this "box-hauling" and making no headway whatever, until a good-natured wind had pity on us and carried us across the line and beyond its unsettled regions. We now plunged into that most intricate part of the China seas—that leading to and between the islands of Banca and Sumatra. There is no sea more infested with rocks and dangers, to say nothing of narrow channels; indeed we were sometimes to all appearance completely hemmed in by land, some of it so low that only the trees could be seen above water. We passed two or three islands, uninhabited, but extremely beautiful. One of them I saw while at the wheel one Saturday morning. As we were only going five knots, and not a cloud obscured the sky, I had ample time to observe and admire it. Rising out of the sea in gentle slopes, it was clad in such rich vegetation as only a tropical sun can produce. It closely resembled the imaginative picture I had traced in my mind of the one occupied by Robinson Crusoe.

Concerning sailors' superstition, a curious

instance came under my notice about this time. Hitherto I had felt assured that the reports spread ashore were grossly exaggerated, as no case had happened to my knowledge since we left London. It may readily be guessed that Captain F——'s death was the cause of the outbreak in question. One lovely evening, it being our watch from eight to twelve o'clock, I was at my usual station on the quarter-deck, leaning over the bulwarks, looking at the last glimmer of daylight as it hovered over the western horizon, and watching the progress of the ship through the calm rippling water, sparkling with phosphorescence. Decidedly no place or time for spectral visits, I should have thought —shocking bad taste on the part of any ghost who disturbed our worldly peace at this unseasonable hour in lieu of the conventional twelve o'clock—

> "'Tis now the very witching time of night,
> When churchyards yawn, and hell itself breathes out
> Contagion to this world."

Silence reigned fore and aft, excepting the occasional sound of Mr Turner's footsteps as he slowly paced the weather side of the poop.

Having been in the cuddy to see the time—nine o'clock—I lay down on the deck for an hour's dose, when I was startled at hearing the after-bell struck three times. No one keeping time but myself, and besides its not being in accordance with the hour, led me to suppose there was something wrong with the helmsman, Edgren Andrews, one of the ordinary seamen. Hastening down the poop-ladder on his way for'ard, he said he had come over very unwell, and entreated me to take the wheel for a short time while he went into the forecastle to get a "swig" of cold tea. After a few minutes he took his post again, and I returned to the quarter-deck. Barely a quarter of an hour had elapsed before the bell was a second time struck. Andrews met me half-way on the poop. He said he still felt very bad—so ill, in fact, that he was obliged a second time to leave the wheel without waiting to be relieved. He promised to take my next wheel if I would end his now; but, naturally, I was glad to relieve the poor fellow. I thought his conduct a little strange somehow. In the morning, seeing he looked no worse, I inquired the cause of his late indis-

position. He took me on the forecastle-head, and there, upon his oath, related the following circumstances: As the evening set in, Captain F——'s ghost appeared on the weather side of the poop, anxiously looking at the sails and the sky; but all in a moment turning towards him, presented such a terrible expression of features that he nearly dropped from fright: it was then that he struck the bell. In his country—he was a Swede—they guarded against spirits by carrying a knife and a Bible about their persons; so when I relieved him the first time, it was to procure these articles. He mentioned, in parenthesis, that although he might have filled a bucket with knives, he couldn't get a Bible; but happening to possess an old Swedish novel, he pocketed that, relying on our late captain's ignorance of the Swedish language for success with the substituted book. However, he added, it wouldn't do. When he returned, and I went away, the ghost again became visible, but this time slowly walking up and down the poop, until, approaching the binnacle, and noticing the card, he made violent signs to him to alter the ship's course. This so

horrified him that he struck the bell, and ran away, taking, to shorten the distance, the weather side, when the spectre barred the way, refusing to let him pass the officer's side, and obliging him to go to leeward.

Off the island of Banca we were struck by a nasty squall, such as the vicinity of islands produces in general, but there in particular. When our watch came on deck at eight o'clock the weather looked fine enough—a starry sky, and only a light breeze carrying us along at the rate of three knots. Nothing occurred until eleven o'clock, when, to our astonishment, it was observed that what we had been taking for land was in reality a heavy bank of black clouds, which now rapidly ascended from the horizon. Immediately rings out the order, "Clew up the mizzen-royal!" and before we had time to obey, "Let go fore and main royal halyards!" Rain came down in drowning torrents; and, as some ran to execute the multitudinous orders, others cut below to fetch oilskins and sou'-westers. She soon laid over to it at an unpleasant angle. "Let go your fore and mizzen topgallant halyards!" roared out the captain, who had hast-

ened on deck, "and stand by the main!" The confusion was indescribable. Raining "cats and dogs," blowing, darkening as the clouds swept upon us, we had our hands full. Presently a lull takes place, a shaking of the sails, and before we have time to look round, the wind chops from off the starboard beam to the port bow with renewed force. Land hemmed us in on all sides, and our position was eminently critical. With our utmost exertions, we were able to haul the yards round before she gathered much sternway, *and then the watch below were called!* after we had done all the work. The mainsail was hauled up, and royals and top-gallant sails stowed. By the morning the sun rose as bright as ever, the wind became fair and steady, the mainsail and light sails were set, and we proceeded on our course, wiser by experience, under a mizzen-royal staysail. This day appropriately was a Sunday—23d November; and during the afternoon, while I was at the wheel from twelve to two, we passed the British ship John Milton, of Jersey, bound east.

A very peculiar effect of mirage is noticeable

about here. Any land situated about the horizon has the singular appearance of floating in the air, the sky being plainly visible between it and the sea; and as one draws nearer, the centre first touches, then the sides, causing it to assume the shape of an arc downwards. With islands covered with wood, the trees seem to be growing upon nothing for some considerable time before the land rises to the view.

As the day closed in, we were sailing smoothly along, almost due south, the island of Sumatra on our right, and Banca on our left; but so soon as the sun had gone down, squalls took possession of the night, coming in sudden gusts. If the wind had been fair, the captain would no doubt have chanced the narrow channel and moonless nights, and run before them with square yards. Although during the day it kept about a point free, at night-time it chopped round dead ahead. We were obliged to drop anchor, furl all the sails, and wait till morning. Lightning, thunder, and rain varied the monotony of our rest; the peals of thunder were so terrific that the ship trembled under the concussion.

Tuesday, the 25th.—Head wind all day, and

tacking ship every ten minutes. Between five and six o'clock in the evening, nearing the low-lying shore of Sumatra, we once more ran to our respective places at the mate's order, "Stations!" (all night in: all hands on deck). Helm-a-lee! Jib-sheets and fore-sheet are let go, tacks and sheets raised, and we stand by the crossjack braces, ready to haul round the after-yards directly she gets near enough to the wind. The wind has died away to a light breeze, and she comes up but slowly. Presently the captain sings out, "Flatten in jib-sheets!" followed by "Board fore-tack and haul aft your fore-sheet!" She doesn't seem to move either way. We ease off the spanker-sheet, but to no purpose; there she remains. Mr Turner heaves the lead for'ard, and the cause is plain to all. We are aground; the ship is a foot and a half in the mud by the bows, but apparently afloat aft. It was a couple of hours past flood. "Clew up the royals!" and as I spring up at the fore, the quarter-boat is being lowered with the kedge-anchor. From the fore-royal-yard I obtained an extensive view of the land, which was

covered with dense woods and jungle. A few birds could be discerned hurrying to their night quarters. The scene was strikingly wild and solitary as the sun sank beneath the distant tree-tops. Our distance from the shore might have been 200 yards, and the trees and bushes grew down to the water's edge so densely that any attempt at landing and moving in any direction would have been an impossibility. A few large birds could be seen hovering about the shore, while the hum and clatter of the smaller ones retiring to rest for the night was plainly audible.

Getting on deck again, I found the hands manning the capstan on the quarter-deck, heaving on the warp. We got a couple of turns in, but the ship never moved; it was the anchor dragging home. At eight o'clock anchor-watch was set, the warp being secured round the bitts, waiting for the morning's tide. Having to turn out for an hour at 10 P.M., I soon went below, and rolling into my bunk, fell asleep. When I came on deck, the ship was lying over nearly on her beam-ends, from the tide receding, and everything looked dispiriting

enough. The captain anxiously hove the lead over the tafferel every quarter of an hour with "Chips" and the mate, but the ship did not change her position. Our position was novel and unexpected, if nothing else, and nobody seemed to know how long we should remain in this helpless condition. At half-past ten, one of the customary night squalls swept over us, and as the topsails and courses had not been stowed, they slatted furiously to and fro. However, by bracing the yards to the wind no damage was incurred. Before doing so, the captain had ordered the yards to be braced square to the wind, in the hopes of driving us off, but without effect.

At high water next morning we once more manned the capstan, and we put our utmost strength and weight on the bars. "Come lads," said "Chips," who was next to me, "heave—heave and paul!" "Surge handsomely, Johnson." In a few minutes we are walking steadily round. This time we are not heaving the "kedge" home—we ourselves are moving; the good ship glides once more into her briny element. A smile simultaneously

shines on the captain's face, and before the order is well delivered, we are up aloft loosing the top-gallant sails and royals. By a stroke of luck we got off without the slightest damage; and although the wind was still ahead, we did our best by beating against it—tacking every quarter of an hour. As night closed in we let go the anchor, and as the sky looked threatening, all the sails were furled. We were having enough of the Straits; what with dropping anchor and stowing sails, weighing in the morning and loosing them again, and beating down against a head wind, growling was plentiful.

During almost all this night it poured with rain, but seemingly it did not deter the spectre captain from again appearing. Baker and Scottie swore the next morning that they saw him sitting in his favourite arm-chair on the poop, while they were keeping their anchor-watch from 1 to 2 A.M.; and further, that he was the more noticeable on account of the white pants he wore. He remained sitting in the rain, idiotically defying rheumatics for about half an hour, when he vanished. Feeling satis-

fied that the ghost had quitted the ship, Scottie mustered up his courage and went aft to see the time; but, horror! the apparition stood at the end of the passage at the cuddy-door with its arms folded, and looking fiercely at him. He bolted for'ard and told Baker; and rather than attempt to see the clock again, they guessed the time, and, in consequence, did not call their relieving shipmates till twenty minutes past the hour. Scottie was a "wild Heelan'-man," and alone would not have commanded much credit; but Baker was a man of sound common-sense, surprising as it may seem.

CHAPTER XIII.

FOR ST HELENA.

A LEADING wind sprang up early the following morning, and at daybreak we weighed anchor, set all sail, and under a taut bowline we stood out of the Straits, going seven knots; but in the evening the wind chopped round ahead again, and during the night there was frequent lightning. Next day, Saturday, we again made a little headway, and in the afternoon a couple of boats came off from Anjer with fruit, cocoa-nuts, sugar, Java sparrows, and a number of other beautiful little birds. The captain bought thirty-five of the latter, a quantity of small onions and cocoa-nuts, and some of their peculiar sugar. He gave four cocoa-nuts and a large basket of onions to the house, the latter of which

we pickled. The natives here have a habit of chewing the "betel-nut," which colours the saliva a crimson red, and as it dribbles down each side of their mouth it looks like blood. They remained alongside until the evening, when a breeze sprang up—head wind again—and we resumed our wearisome task of tacking. The discontent increased amongst the men; we went "about ship" every two hours during the night, and no doubt some patiences were well tried, especially as some men almost think the captain answerable for an unfavourable wind. My arms ached badly from the continual box-hauling and pulling up staysail-sheets over the stays.

Sunday afternoon, the wind chopped round a bit, and became a leading wind down the Straits, much to our delight. The land is generally high and thickly wooded, but without any great beauty. We lost sight of it finally, Tuesday 2d December, having been four days beating down the Straits of Sunda. The weather, which had been very variable lately, with occasional showers, now set in wet for three days, and, the wind hauling round again

ahead, we had a miserable time of it—for sailors dislike rain even more than a blow. A fair wind and fine weather at last returning, we made the best of it by crowding on studding-sails.

During the one day's calm that intervened, prior to the change of weather, the monotony of ship life was relieved by one of Jack's best sports—catching a shark. It being our watch on deck in the afternoon, we were all variously at work—repairing rigging, mending sails, and making sennit and foxes. The sails hung lazily down the masts; while the man at the wheel leant drowsily over it, with his arms folded between the spokes, and protected from the scorching sun by an awning. The sky, as usual in a calm, was covered with small streaky and fleecy clouds, and further obscured by a blending haze; it produced a kind of lead colour, which was reflected all round by the endless waste of waters. Presently Scottie, who was on the port mainyard-arm, splicing in a grommet on to the jackstay, sings out, "A shark on port bow!" In an instant we left our work, and rushed on the forecastle-head

to see the marine monster the better. Sure enough there it was, about four feet below the surface, and six or seven feet from the ship, and, with the exception of an occasional sway of its tail, motionless as a log of wood. It seemed not to be affected in the least by the noise the water made in washing backwards and forwards round the stem. A shark-hook was soon procured by the carpenter, and a large piece of beef having been affixed, Baker went out with it on the bobstays to the martingale end, and there, with the bight of the line in his hand, dropped and splashed it about with as much noise as possible. The voracious fish, "slewing" round, slowly glided on, as if to punish the temerity of one who dared disturb his peace, and turning right over on his back, made a clean mouthful of both hook and meat. Most of the watch below were on deck now, tailing on to the rope holding the hook; but our zeal was too much. Thinking the shark was safely ours, directly the hook disappeared within its jaws we tugged and hauled so energetically that the grim-looking fish became thoroughly disgusted, which it clearly demon-

strated by letting go the hook but keeping the bait! Another piece was soon put on, and we again drew its attention our way by dancing the lump of meat in the water. Fairly secured this time, we vigorously hauled on the line, slackening and tautening alternately with the fellow's powerful dashes and sweeps. Having got him half-way between the water and the cathead, we feared he would stave in the planks and open the seams in the bows with the battering of his tail. At last the bully of the deep was hauled right on to the forecastle head, when a serio-comic drama ensued. Johnson and another man were knocked down in a twinkling; and, scared at the eccentric behaviour of the fish—which acted like most fish out of water, only with unusual spirit—we scampered away, some up the fore-rigging, some down on the main-deck. Meanwhile, our cold-blooded "specimen" carried on like mad; now on its side, with nose and tail in the air—now reversed, with only the tip of either nose or tail touching the deck. For five minutes no one dared approach him; then, profiting by a momentary stoppage, and armed with his

large axe, "Chips" cut off his tail at one blow. This is the only effectual method of stilling a shark; and as he lay nearly motionless, the blood streamed along the white deck. By means of ropes he was lowered on to the main-deck and cut open. The fins and tail make good sand-paper. Sailors will not eat shark under any consideration, as they believe it is like eating their fellow "salts" upon whom the monster fed. But the apprentices, not being quite such "old sailors," had several big slices cut out and cooked. It is very tough, and has an intense fishy taste.

One of the prettiest and most striking objects in calm weather is a "Portuguese man-o'-war." On the vast ocean their minuteness makes them remarkable; and on a quiet sunshiny day numbers of these little fellows, with their pink sail hoisted, may be seen scudding along before the zephyr—blowing to them a gale of wind. Beside the "Portuguese man-o'-war," there is another little creature, somewhat resembling him in his looks and habits. Both belong to the briny ocean; but while the "Portuguese man-o'-war" might be compared to the

bluff-bowed frigate, the Nautilus resembles the graceful, fanciful yacht. The Nautilus is a fine-weather tar; while the other, although unable to face anything like a gale, is yet a hardy sailor, "carrying on" sometimes to such an extent as would make many a bold skipper blush with shame when taking in his mizzen-top-gallant sail. The sail or membrane of the "Portuguese man-o'-war" is of pale-blue colour, edged with pink; and many a time have I hauled him out of his native seas in drawing the customary bucket of water at eight bells to test the thermometers.

On the 8th December we entered the "trades," and soon after fell in with large numbers of birds called by sailors "boobies" or "Indian Ocean geese," which frequent these parts. They habitually settle on ships' yards at sunset, and remain there during the night if undisturbed. Directly they fall asleep they are easily caught by any one who chooses to go aloft after them, although, being large birds, they sometimes make such good use of their powerful wings as to make the capturer glad to let them go. The 9th December, in lat. 12°

42′ S., long. 94° 40′ E., we passed and signalled the ship Star of Persia from England, bound to Calcutta. As she crossed our bows, plunging into and rising out of the sea, laying over under a main-skysail, she presented a fine sight. The next day, at about one bell of the afternoon watch, a sudden gust carried away our port fore-topmast-studding-sail boom with a loud crash, the boom brace, which serves as a stay, having parted. The wind being nearly on the beam, we had not much difficulty in getting the sails in. We lost the "trades" in 23° S., but soon after a stiff breeze sprang up on the quarter.

On the 21st December we encountered a gale, the heaviest one since leaving Foo-chow. We had been lying for twelve hours in a dead calm, and the huge rollers rocking the ship plainly foretold what was coming. The sky was inky black, while the sea presented that dull leaden colour peculiar to treacherous weather. In the evening the second mate, hastening forward, sang out, "Clew up the main-royal!" As I climbed the rigging to execute the order, large drops of rain fell; and just as I had got the bunt up, and the bunt-gasket

passed, a strong puff came which, taking me unprepared, nearly blew me off the yard. Stepping down the Jacob's ladder, I heard a dim sound, as of somebody calling to me from the deck, and presently a rattling noise beside me showed the halyards had been let go, and the topgallant yard was going down with a run. There was no mistaking things now. Having stowed the maintop-gallant sail, we descended on deck, and went up to the mizzen upper topsail, while others were laying out on the bowsprit, furling the outer jib. A strong steady breeze from the S.E., with a high sea, was the result, and we wildly dashed along through foam and surf at the rate of eight to ten miles an hour.

We were now nearing the Cape of Good Hope, and the older "shells" said we might expect a continuation of this kind of weather until we got round to the other side, although it was summer-time in these latitudes. But happily they prophesied unwisely for once at all events. In a couple of days the clouds cleared off, the wind fell to a gentle breeze, and the sea gradually went down. This was very

fortunate, as Christmas was approaching, and everybody wanted the 25th December to be a fine day at least. The captain gave orders to the cook to kill the big Australian sow, which, on the morning of the 24th, he proceeded to carry out, though not without a laughable breakdown. He was securing its legs on the main-hatch, when an unexpected roll of the ship sent both pig and cook sliding into the lee-scuppers. The pig, willing enough to be killed in a fair straightforward way, failed to comprehend the reason of this manœuvre, and struggled desperately, and with success, to free itself; whilst the cook vainly endeavoured to get on his feet, the deck being very slippery from having only just been washed. There was "Slushy," sometimes over, sometimes under the pig; now shoving it bodily away, now hanging on to it by the hind-legs; and both keeping up such a chorus of sounds as fairly to bring all hands on deck, who enjoyed the fun heartily.

The next job after the pig was killed, was to scald it to get off the bristles; and the wash-deck tub having been got alongside the galley,

"Slushy" was going to fill it, when a thought struck us how we should get the pig in. We certainly could not lift it up with our strength alone, so we rigged up a boom from the top of the house to the foretopmast backstay, and fixing a tackle amidships by means of a strap, we slung him up, and into the tub of boiling water, which he fitted so closely that his body touched the side all round. "Pull him out!" said the cook; and we bore down on the tackle fall with a will, but nothing moved; the pig was jammed in, perhaps by the swelling of the body in the hot water. Two fresh men coming to lend us a hand, we bore down on the fall with a determination, whetted by our previous defeat, which nearly ran up "two blocks" pig and tub. However, by a couple sitting on the edge of the tub while the others hauled, we managed to extricate our friend. Armed with saucepan-lids we set to scraping away, but to our dismay, we found that the layers of paint with which his back was covered sadly increased our difficulties. At last we succeeded after a fashion, when we left our work, and the cook took charge.

25th December, Christmas-day.—The sea was smooth, the sky a dark blue, and the breeze moderate. It is a dull day at sea. We washed in the morning, and put on our clean things; but we had no visits to pay, none to receive; no preparations for the afternoon or evening dance; no family meetings, which constitute a real Christmas cheer. Some took their pipes on to the forecastle-head, where stories were related of past Christmas-days at home. Others contented themselves with reading in their bunks, I being amongst the number. For dinner we had, besides the fresh pork (a great treat after the salt meat), double rations of preserved potatoes, and a large plum-pudding for each mess. Jack never is contented; some were growling because they had no melted butter or sauce with the pudding. The plums were scarce: and well might a solitary one say to another, "Here am I—where are you?" Some call it "railway duff," with a plum at every station, which does not say much for the proximity of the stations. Grog was served out in the afternoon, and again in the evening. Luckily the wind held steady all

day, so that we neither touched brace nor halyard. This was my second Christmas-day at sea, and cheerless enough I thought it. The previous one, happening on our outward-bound passage, when just before embarking all hands had had a good spell ashore, passed off with a certain amount of joviality. And then the novelty of meeting old Father Christmas under a tropical sun, together with a sprinkling of romance still left in me, and called forth by the beauteous expanse of blue sky and water, over which we gracefully glided under all plain sail, impressed me quite differently. But since then I had learned a little more of sea life. Old Father Neptune, jocular enough to the young salt-water aspirant before treading his ship, becomes cold in the extreme so soon as he has him at sea, sparing no effort in trying to knock all romance out of him.

Boxing-day came, and with it a clouded sky. The wind gradually increased during the day, and a heavy sea swayed the ship with alternate heaves. During the afternoon the mizzen, fore and main royals, and flying jib were taken off the ship; and in our dog-watch, from 4 to 6

P.M., we stowed the mizzen and fore top-gallant sails in a drizzling rain. I was heartily glad at four bells to get below to have my tea, and enjoy a couple of hours of dryness. The wind blew shrilly through the rigging and ropes, whilst the sea rolled over and over in black foaming masses, sending now and again a malicious spray sweeping across the deck. M'Ewan fetched the tea from the galley in the only two remaining hook-pots of both watches, whilst I got out from the locker the plates and the kid, vinegar-bottle, and bread-barge. Having finished our sumptuous meal, I put the utensils away; and we both turned in our bunks to indulge in a smoke and a read until eight bells summoned us on deck again.

Presently Johnson came in and enlivened us with his quaint remarks and quainter songs. Knowing he was working very hard at navigation, I inquired when he thought of "passing the Board" for second mate, and he replied that he hoped to do so whenever the ship returned to England. "Stow the outer jib!" sang out the mate, rushing by, and Johnson vanished out of the doorway. Five minutes

might have elapsed, when suddenly a shouting was heard on deck. There came such a wild sound, so unlike the customary voice of the mate, or the singing out of the watch on a "downhaul," that M'Ewan, springing up in his bunk, said, "S——, what's that?" But as he was naturally of an excitable nature, I replied, "Oh, it's all right! perhaps the 'downhaul' has carried away." But he jumped out of his bunk and went on deck, from whence he speedily returned. "Come out, man! there's something wrong," he said to me, hurriedly; and in an instant I was on deck. I shall not easily forget the scene of indescribable confusion which there met my eyes. All hands were on deck running here and there. It was a man overboard! "Who is it? who's gone?" everybody asked. "Johnson," replied the second mate, as he excitedly told me to give him a pull on the port forebuntline. "Poor fellow!" I heard several say. "Haul up the mainsail!" roared out the mate: "Slack away your sheet!" "Bear down on the clewgarnets, lads!" The next order was, "Lee fore brace!" and we hauled the yards forward to beat as close up to windward as possible.

We were now under the three lower topsails only. There was a man at each masthead looking out; and the rest of the hands on deck gathered on the weather side of the forecastle-head, vainly stretching their eyes each time we rose. What breathless excitement marked every face! eagerness to rescue a fellow-being from death—impotency to act. The captain walked hurriedly up and down the weather side of the poop, anxiously looking through his glasses at intervals. "Poor Johnson!" "Who would have thought it, now?" "Well, there's a chance yet," were the ejaculations heard from his shipmates. The wind blew bleak and strong, and the huge waves grew blacker and blacker as the evening gave way to night. Half-a-dozen men wanted to lower the quarter-boat to go in search of him; but the captain wisely forbade it, as his whereabouts was now not known, and they themselves would be in great danger in such a heavy sea. The helmsman threw him a life-buoy as he floated past the stern, which being painted white was more distinguishable than a man; whether he laid hold of it or not was never known. The unfortunate man was never

again seen. On account of the danger in bringing the ship to the wind in that high sea, she was wore round, and in the large circle made the masthead-men lost sight of the unhappy sailor; indeed, I believe we were three or four miles to leeward by the time we came up on the other tack. "We shall see no more of Johnson," said Turner to me, which I thought too true to need a reply. After beating up for half an hour, the captain came to the break of the poop, and himself gave the order to set sail and stand on our course again. This sealed poor Johnson's fate. Without doubt he could plainly see us all the while (he was a good swimmer), and when he saw us vanishing away, what must have been his state of mind? It seemed hard to leave our unhappy shipmate to his terrible end—and we but half obeyed the order, still hoping we might see him; but by the time the three upper topsails were hoisted, and the foresail and mainsail set, darkness had so completely set in as to finally show the uselessness of further delay. This was a sad blow to all of us: a good ordinary seaman, a genial shipmate, his loss was much felt, and the more

so by its suddeness. In dipping for the gasket under the jib-boom, he either missed the foot-rope, or was swept off by a sea, having let himself down the martingale to clear the gasket end. Baker, who was next and just above him, said that the port bow struck and turned him over; but apparently he was not hurt, as George, who was at the wheel, distinctly saw him smile when drifting by the stern. James Johnson, native of Aberdeen, shipped in Hong-Kong, was only nineteen years of age, although he might have passed for twenty-two.

At eight o'clock that night, when our watch came on deck for its four hours, we silently sat down on a spar under the lee of the house. A long time elapsed before a word was spoken. A solitary ship at sea, surrounded day after day, week after week, by nothing but sky and water, and cut off from all the living world, becomes a little world in itself—its inhabitants being so dependent on one another, that the loss of one occasions a gap never properly filled up. The awful suddenness usually attending these accidents scarcely impresses the mind at first with the gravity of the fact: it is only

when the excitement is over, and the watch is quietly together, as we were then, that one fully realises the event—the loss of a man. His bunk is vacant, his hook-pot and pannikin hang by the side, and his chest, unowned and unopened, plainly tells of a missing man. At five bells the second mate ordered the fore upper topsail to be furled; and as I felt my way up the rigging, rolling and rising in the pitchy darkness, I had, as no doubt others had, the fate of Johnson before my eyes.

It is customary at sea to sell by auction a deceased seaman's effects, so that the proceeds may be handed over to his nearest relations. Accordingly, the following afternoon, during the first dog-watch, the weather having cleared up, all hands were called to the main-hatch to assist at the auction, the mate acting as auctioneer. I thought it would have been a melancholy affair; but happy-go-lucky Jack is marvellously light-hearted: his sorrow is but of short duration. He does not attempt to buy anything cheap; on the contrary, he gladly pays double the value with the view of augmenting the fund. Trousers, boots, Crimean

shirts, dungarees, ducks, go-ashore togs, all passed the hammer amid any amount of joking, caused by the dilapidated condition of some of the articles held up, which state was sufficient in itself for the mate to warrant their soundness. "Now," said the mate, holding up an old greasy tarry pair of dungaree pants, worth perhaps a good washing and nothing more, "how much for this elegant sailor-like pair of trousers?" We look at each other and at the auctioneer, to see who will make the first bid. "Half-a-crown!" sings out Jack Anderson. "Three bob!" follows up George. "Four bob, and who wants them!" closes in the "Doctor;" and the trousers are knocked down to him. A pilot-coat, nearly new, occasions some spirited bidding. Somebody starts with £1. Baker and Andrew sing out together 25s., and Anderson 30s. Baker finally carries it off at £2. Everything was bought but his chest (a Chinese camphor-wood one). Whether superstition covered it or not, I am unable to say; but it was lashed up under the jolly-boat, on the quarter-deck skids, where it remained.

The weather now decidedly changed for the

better; although a head wind, it was so moderate that the sails were barely filled, and the sea was only rippled; but the nights were chilly. We passed Algoa Bay the 3d January, and so close into land that the captain saw the ships in harbour by means of his glasses. The coast was barren and sandy looking from the distance we saw it. We came up with a large painted-port ship in crossing the meridian of the Cape; but as it was past 8 P.M. we could not see to signal. Being in the track of all westward-bound vessels, we passed several others, too far off, however, to speak, with the exception of one, the Royal Charlie, from Calcutta bound to Dundee, seventy-six days out. Having doubled the Cape, we shaped a more northerly course, and soon fell in with the S.E. trades, proceeding under square yards up the South Atlantic, and steering for St Helena, where the captain intended to put in for water and fresh provisions. It sometimes happens that captains, in making for this little rocky island, altogether miss it in consequence of some slight error in navigation; or else, when sighted, it is so far off on the beam as not to

warrant the delay attending such an alteration of course, inasmuch as calling there is not generally of absolute necessity. The captain offered one pound of tobacco to the first man who should sight it, and five pounds of preserved apples to the second; so that a man needed no telling to relieve the look-out.

The climate daily became warmer; and in our respective watches we were busily employed cleaning, scraping, and painting the ship to look respectable going into port. Two months had elapsed since any of us had touched land; and we were looking forward, with no small degree of pleasure, to the prospect of being in harbour, with the bare possibility of a favoured few amongst us getting a run ashore. At last, one evening, the mate came forward saying the island would very soon be in sight, and bade the look-out have his eyes about him. Although my first watch below that night, I remained on the forecastle-head till four bells, hoping for the honour of singing out "Land ho!" the first, to say nothing of the material reward promised. Nothing had yet been seen when we came on deck at midnight; and in-

stead of turning in at 4 A.M., M'Ewan and I took up positions on the lower and upper topsail yards respectively. As the faint morning light dawned over from the eastward, I strained my sight to its utmost, but to no avail. A little bluish-grey peak on the horizon ahead would all at once absorb my attention. Looking steadfastly at it, two such dots, then three would appear, until reality cancelled the two imaginary ones. Still watching the hazy outline, equally satisfied that that was land and the tobacco mine, I would be on the point of singing out, when taking one last look I found I had been basing my enthusiasm on both a castle and a cloud in the air.

Suddenly I heard "Land ho!" from aft: the captain was the first to see St Helena. As it sometimes happens, because of layers of mist, the land was seen on deck before it was discernible from aloft. We quickly approached it with a fine breeze, going along nine knots; and as the ship drew near, its bold outline and steep and craggy cliffs were very striking. Being at the wheel, I was better able to notice the scenery than if I had been with the others

clearing away for letting go the anchor. The N.E. side is an almost perpendicular wall of rock, rising out of a mass of boiling surge, which every now and then dashes itself with violence against its foot, concealing it in a cloud of spray. The clear atmosphere, together with the great height of the wall, makes the distance curiously deceptive. As we passed, it appeared not more than a biscuit's-throw from the ship; whereas it really was nearly a mile off.

We rounded the point and let go the anchor before the little town of Jamestown. There is a continual roar, like distant thunder, caused by the everlasting breaking of the huge Atlantic rollers against the iron-bound coasts. Looking at the island up the valley in which the town is built, it would be difficult to picture a more romantic little spot. Lying in mid-ocean, at a distance of over 1000 miles from the mainland—the African coast—it reminds one of an oasis in the desert.* James-

* St Helena is ten and a half miles long and six a half miles broad, its highest point reaching an altitude of 2700 feet. Discovered by the Portuguese navigator Juan de Nova

town, seen from the sea, looks quaint and old-fashioned. Its red brick and plaster buildings; old red brick church, with lofty steeple; the flat quay, stretching the length of the town, with a drawbridge leading thereto, and guarded by a curious old sentry-porch, give it the appearance of an old Dutch seaport, if allowance be made for the hills surrounding it and the high cliffs on either side. When a ship arrives in port, she is the object of the most severe criticism from all the other vessels; but our fresh-painted masts and clean bright work could make no other than a favourable impression.

Having dropped anchor, we furled all the sails snugly, coiled the ropes down, and knocked off work for the remainder of the day, it being then about eleven o'clock. The inevitable officials boarded us in due course; the doctor amongst them. "Any illness aboard, captain?" he said, shaking hands with him; "any casualty to report?" "No; nothing beyond the loss of a

Castella on the 21st May 1501 (St Helena's Day), it has since become historically celebrated as the place where Napoleon I. ended his career and life.

man overboard on the 26th December," answered our skipper; which fact was forthwith noted in a pocket-book. Soon after this he went ashore to ship a new man, see the agents, and order some fresh provisions. Meanwhile, boat after boat arrived alongside with their loads of niggers with things likely to tempt Jack. Soft tack, fruit, photographs of Napoleon's tomb, second-hand clothes and sea-boots left in the island by whalemen, pretty little birds, and curious bead-necklaces. They exposed their wares for sale along by the bulwarks; but such was the mutual friendly love of these black salesmen, that most of their time was occupied in protecting their respective property from each other's hands. In fact, they kept up a continual disturbance even before they boarded us, and at last they carried on in so boisterous a manner that the mate sent them flying over the bulwarks with a rope's end, catching their goods up as best they could. I thought I should have split my sides laughing as many got into the wrong boats. Three worthies slid down and cast off in a craft that belonged to none of them, which

was sufficient reason for all to innocently claim possession; and as they drifted away from the ship—to judge by the indifference with which they received and dealt blow after blow on each other's woolly heads—but little heed was attached to one another's supposed rights, notwithstanding the amount of pressure brought to bear, in a double sense, in their respective causes. But the wicked trio did not notice that they were drifting down on a boat containing the rightful owner, who, whilst they kept up the tussle, and every moment threatened to capsize their boat, but ill concealed his suppressed wrath by striking his black woolly head on the gunwale and dipping his feet in the water. He was on them like a thunderbolt, capsized the frail and overtaxed bark with equal promptitude, and all four hanging on, shrieking and fighting, they drifted alongside a whaler, whose crew ultimately restored peace and concord amongst them.

We made a good dinner in the house on fish, eggs, and soft-tommy; for we, together with "Chips," had been for six weeks putting by half our "whack" of salt pork weekly, which

we now exchanged for two dozen loaves. The captain was no sooner away from the ship than Mr Mason was again evidently drunk. Profiting by this, three of the men went aft at four o'clock, and obtained permission to go ashore —which so emboldened the remainder, that all but one and a young Yankee whaleman, who had been shipped to replace poor Johnson, followed their example with the same success. Neither were M'Ewan and I slow to avail ourselves of the opportunity of exploring the quaint little town. Everybody said it was a rare chance, and spirits were high. It is very seldom that a merchant sailor ever gets ashore here, for the reason that ships only put in for water or fresh provisions, and generally make sail again in twenty-four hours or thereabouts, unless damaged by bad weather. However, whalers frequently resort there to let their crews have a run ashore, after cruising about in the Atlantic for several weary months.

The mate had sufficient reason left to forbid the quarter-boat being lowered, so that a boatman was hailed, who with his mate took us off; their large boat being down to the gunwale

in water. The landing is not far short of the horrible. There is no pier, no jetty, no breakwater—nothing to arrest the force of the heavy rollers, which dash with a tremendous noise up against the stone stairs, now rising high up, now sinking low down. The boats are broad-beamed, and are fitted with a short pole in the stern fixed perpendicularly. As the wary boatman cautiously approaches stern on, rising and sinking a dozen feet and more, hove right and left, you hang on to this while undergoing the "chucking about" business. An iron crane, with a rope attached, overhangs the steps, which, should you miss stepping out at the exact moment, you lay hold of, and by that means are swung on *terra firma*, hanging in the air. Once landed, we allowed the men to take the lead. For the same reason that the "after birds" do not like the apprentices entering the forecastle, so they look with disfavour on them accompanying its inmates ashore; they are supposed to pick up the ideas of "old sailors" and "sea lawyers," and be otherwise contaminated. The consequence is, that when meeting a body of our forecastle friends in port, one is assailed with

a little chaffing—sarcastic and otherwise. "Hi! look at our brass-bounders!" "Make way for the midshipmen!" "You did well to put on gloves: your hands are black and tarry enough." "What orders have you?" "Ah! I would not be seen walking—ah! with a common sailor!" All given and received without the slightest offence.

Walking along with high cliffs on our left and the harbour on our right, we reached the quay, or rather that which has the appearance of one, then crossing the moat, we entered Jamestown through the porch. In passing here after 9.30 P.M., all persons not belonging to the island have to sign their names in the guard-room. Before crossing the moat we halted to gaze upon the romance of the place. The waves as they rushed curling and sweeping along the beach with a loud roar, lent a pleasant harmonising sound to the occasion. Before us, out in the offing, lay the shipping; at the back of it the wide ocean. The sun was then setting, and as he cast his gorgeously-coloured rays over the heavens, illuminating the scene with unparalleled glory, I was much

struck with the peaceful beauty of a St Helena evening. Our ship looked but a little bark in the distance, gracefully bobbing on the swell; and so diminutive did she seem—such a mere dot—that I could not refrain from wondering how we could possibly have found our way across so many thousand miles of sea, through storms and dark nights.

We first of all made for the steep flight of steps called "Jacob's Ladder," but meeting a soldier on the way up, he informed us no one was allowed up or down after sunset. They are cut out of the solid rock, and number 365 steps; commencing at the foot of the right side of the valley looking from the sea, and rising in one straight line to the top of the cliff. Although each step is not high, it is so deep that the legs cannot stretch from one to the other as in going up the stairs of a house, consequently the fatigue is much greater. We strolled up through the only street, and with nothing better to do, watched a number of little children, black as the ace of spades, playing at "Tom Tidler's Ground." The only shop we found open was a kind of general store. In

the windows we noticed Colman's mustard, Day and Martin's blacking, and various other home produce. Having entered the "Foresters' Arms," and indulged in a "liquor," where the landlord gave me several old copies of the 'Daily News' (a great boon), we wended our way back to the sea; and whilst waiting for a boat we had hailed to take us off, the captain came down, got in his boat, and shoved off without saying a word: perhaps he was surprised at seeing us ashore, but greater astonishment was in store for him.

We got aboard soon after he did, and shifted our dress. Presently I heard footsteps coming along the deck, and the voice of the second mate, "Man the windlass!"—the time about half-past nine. Although doubtful of when we should sail, we certainly had not reckoned on it before the morning. Directly afterwards, the second mate, followed by Jack Anderson, came into the house. The captain had inquired for the mate, and upon being told he was in his bunk sound asleep and unfit for duty, he gave orders to man the windlass, with the intention of putting out to sea that night. Mr

Turner could do nothing but obey orders, notwithstanding that he knew full well the hands were ashore. Of course nothing now remained but to report the fact, which he did. The captain took the already anticipated news very quietly, and we turned in for the night.

CHAPTER XIV.

FROM ST HELENA TO NEW YORK.

THE hands came aboard at three in the morning more or less in that interesting condition known as "half-seas over." After breakfast, the mate having recovered the greater part of his senses, all hands were summoned aft to account for their leaving the ship, which was simple enough —the chief mate had granted them leave. The captain, although naturally vexed, was yet evidently amused at the absurd and contradictory statements of his first officer, who, fortunately or unfortunately, having no shame left in him, in no way felt the disgraceful position in which he was placed. While the others were heaving round the windlass, M'Ewan, Reed, and I were up aloft loosing the sails ready for hoisting,

and by ten o'clock, under all plain sail, we stood out to sea, continuing, after a break of twenty-four hours, our voyage to New York.

As there was only sufficient breeze to waft us through the water at the rate of four knots an hour, we did not lose sight of the island till the evening. The dark purple cliffs and patches of bright green vegetation glaring under a tropical sun, and further, standing out in bold contrast from the general barrenness, all slowly, very slowly, were blended together in the one blue colour of distance; and as we cleared the decks up, after getting the anchor inboard during the day, nothing remained in sight of the picturesque island of St Helena but a small faint blue mark on the distant horizon. Watercress there is abundant, but a quantity we had was so bitter that no one could eat it. The water, which is noted, well deserves its good name, for it is excellent. I was pleased to receive a letter from home the morning we arrived, as I had been nearly a year without receiving a letter from any one.

Pemberton, our new shipmate and ordinary seaman, was a tall, lanky young fellow of about

twenty years of age, and a native of Boston, U.S., where his father held the position of a well-to-do civil engineer. Upon inquiring the reason why he came to sea, he was very communicative. His was the old tale. Having lost his situation through irregular hours, and spent all the money which his father had given him, the sea entered his head, and being of a somewhat roving disposition, he shipped in a whaler, which took the feelings of romance out of him at the customary rate. Eighteen months had elapsed since he sailed from America when the ship put into St Helena; and so utterly did he dislike the monotonous whaling life that he succeeded in getting his discharge. He had previously endeavoured to escape at Teneriffe. "I guess," he added, in his nasal twang, "that when this craft reaches Ameriky I knock off the sea."

Passing Ascension many miles off, we crossed the line for the fourth time since our leaving London, after a succession of light breezes from St Helena. When we had crossed to the northward a strong wind sprang up on the starboard beam, accompanied by torrents of rain, the ship

booming along ten and eleven knots. The rain ceased after two days' continual downpour, but the breeze increased so that the royals, stay-sails, flying jib, mizzen and fore top-gallant sails, and outer jib were taken off the ship. She was laying over at such an angle, that going up to stow the foretop-gallant sail, as usual by the weather side, it was more like walking along a level. Calms and light airs followed, with intense heat. During one afternoon, while the watch was variously engaged at work, all more or less scorching in the sun, a steamer's smoke was descried away on our starboard beam, and she was soon observed to be bearing down upon us. As her speed apparently did not equal six miles an hour, a couple of hours elapsed before she lay bobbing and rolling off our stern, with steam shut off. Why she stopped there we hardly knew, unless it were to admire our "blood and entrails" (the British ensign), as our Yankee shipmate remarked, after running it up to the mizzen-peak. She proved to be the Spanish steamer Pizarro, and being crowded with troops, was no doubt bound from Spain to Cuba. They hoisted their ugly red and yellow

ensign, and, the soldiers laughing, hissing, and jeering, they steamed away.

We fell in with numbers of whales in these latitudes, spouting and playing together. We continued to make but little way, being still within the enchanted zone of calms. Our watch is called, say at midnight, to keep the middle watch. "Go aft, M'Ewan—I went last time," I would say, with blinking eyes; then he, with a man (the new helmsman) from the forecastle watch, going to the waist, "All aft, sir!" "Relieve the 'wheel' and 'look-out,'" answers the mate, unable to detect the fraud practised upon him in the darkness. The "wheel" and "look-out" are relieved, the gentle breeze which sprang up half an hour before dies away, and, the sails flapping against the masts with the roll of the ship, I lie down on the quarter-deck, indifferent to everything upon earth but sleep. Suddenly I awake, and hear the second mate sing out a second, perhaps a third time, "Port main-brace!" The rippling water along the side tells of a breeze. We square the yards, hoist the staysails, and all is again still: each one returning to finish his

snooze, with plentiful growling at being disturbed. In another quarter of an hour, "Starboard main-brace!" rings forth, with its consequent slackening and tautening of ropes; followed by "Haul up the clews of the mainsail!" and when eight bells (4 A.M.) at last comes, we lay once more becalmed. Finally, towards the evening of a cloudy day, a steadily increasing breeze sprang up; it was the N.E. trades, and right gladly we hailed them. We dashed along under fore and main royals, as if to make up for lost time. "The New York girls have got hold of the tow-rope!" said the mate during the second dog-watch, as he ordered his watch to take a "swig" on the foretop-gallant halyards.

We were soon after crossing the Gulf Stream, with its dark-blue water and floating fields of "gulf-weed," yellowish brown. Some sailors pickle it in vinegar, and esteem it a relish, although pickled hemp might rival it in flavour. We had a narrow escape one afternoon of having our cutwater knocked away, at least. We passed within a few feet of an immense log of timber floating perpendicularly, with five or six feet out

of the water, which, to judge by the thick coating of barnacles and sea-weed, must have been adrift in the ocean a considerable time. The Southern Cross had now given way to the Great Bear, which rose higher and higher every night, in company with the other constellations of the northern hemisphere. In the winter time, as it was now, the temperature of the Gulf Stream is much higher than the water on its northern limit; entering from the south, no difference of temperature was noticeable.

The Gulf Stream is a vast oceanic current, taking its rise in the Gulf of Mexico. The peculiar formation and position of the gulf render it a receptacle for the currents of the Atlantic sweeping across the north-eastern coast of South America. The waters issue from the gulf in a northerly direction in a deep powerful current, round the Florida coast and inside the islands of Cuba and the Bahamas, being now considerably warmer than the surrounding ocean. The summer temperature of the waters in the gulf is about 87° or 88°, while in the same latitude in the Atlantic it averages only 78°. Continuing onwards, at a rate of five

miles an hour, along the shore of North America, it assumes the proportions of a deep and mighty stream, increasing in size and might as it flows, until, approaching the banks of Newfoundland, it is turned to the eastward across the Atlantic, its stream measuring in breadth about 200 miles; but the warmed waters cover double that extent. After passing the Azores it gradually becomes lost in the wild seas of the Atlantic; only a remnant shaping a northerly course towards the British Isles.

The mate, who had been for several years a captain in the North American trade, which position he lost through his old enemy, drink, had warned us often against the kind of weather we should meet with on the North American coast; but those who had not been that way, including myself, began chaffing him about his prophecies, asking where his cold weather and gales of wind were? not taking into account the Gulf Stream. A sudden change in the temperature told we had emerged from the stream into the cold waters of the North Atlantic. So cold did it become within the space of a day, that the thermometer fell from

temperate to near freezing-point, and everybody got out their cloth trousers and pilot-jackets. This awful change from heat to cold upon men coming from tropical climates is more easily imagined than described. The only wonder is that Jack weathers it in the way he does. It is not the food—vile stuff—he has to thank for his superior *physique*, or that power of endurance which holds him proof against any change of climate; it is the invigorating sea air that keeps Jack's soul and body together—a fact he is well aware of.

"If the Bermudas let you pass, you should beware of Hatteras," says the old sea ditty, which we soon found but too true a warning. Barring a stiff blow or two, only to be expected, we had arrived at last within soundings without really severe weather; and on the Sunday night, 22d February, our first watch on deck, the captain gave orders to signal for a pilot: these here come out a great distance to sea, sometimes 200 to 300 miles. Blue lights were brought from the powder-chest, which, by the by, stood under the cuddy table, distant about four feet from the open "buggy" (stove). While the

second mate burnt one on the forecastle-head, I ran up into the foretop to display one with more advantage; but notwithstanding the shelter afforded under the lee of the mast, I soon got so benumbed with the cold, that I had to come down. It was a fine frosty night: the heavens glistening with myriads of stars, each outvying the other in brightness; while a steady breeze wafted us along at a moderate speed. Still the cold seemed to us intense, in spite of our warm clothing. Our signals were not seen, as no pilot came aboard till the following morning at ten o'clock. Any one more unlike a pilot it would be difficult to find than the individual who stepped on to our quarter-deck to take us, wind and weather permitting, into New York harbour. Of medium height, with a neatly-trimmed full beard, wide-awake hat, and fashionable black coat and grey trousers: such was his person. He brought aboard a copy of the 'New York Herald' newspaper, and the intelligence that a hard frost prevailed ashore; indeed our decks were already getting slippery with ice.

The wind had now chopped round ahead, veering from N.W. to N.E., and there was every

indication of a coming gale. In the afternoon it began piping, while seas broke over the weather bulwarks, covering the rail and rigging with ice. "Clew up the maintop-gallant sail!" roared out the pilot. We had been standing under the break of the forecastle, with oilskins and sou'-westers on, all ready for the first order; and as some of the watch sprang up the main-rigging, others hastened to lower away at the mizzen-topsail halyards. "All hands on deck!" bawled out the captain: "Stow the foresail; Reef the fore and main topsail!" and presently I found myself, with the port watch, struggling up at the fore. A heavy snowstorm broke over us, and the freezing wind seemed to cut right through me, and nearly take my breath away. Reaching the topsail yard, we proceeded to lay out; but my hands being entirely numbed, and therefore useless to hang on by to the jack-stay, I was obliged to chance my footing on the foot-ropes, and slide my body along the yard. I expected every moment to be off, for helpless as I was, the first heavy roll must inevitably have settled me. "Haul out to loo'ard!" and stretching the reef-band along the

yard, we set to tying the points, at which I found my wrists more useful than my hands.

The snow drifted along with the gale—rushing, whirling, whistling, blinding the sight, and covering the decks; and glad we were to get down. The dreaded "nor'-wester" was at last upon us in all its fury. The captain had had the consideration to allow us for breakfast during this weather some hot tinned meat, and hot coffee at noon—luxuries well appreciated by poor uncared-for Jack. When I went below with our watch to get what we called tea, tired out and cold, the water was washing across the deck in our fireless berth, which even looked more cheerless than the outside; and to my dismay, I discovered that the pitiless cold had opened a seam by my bunk, which let in the water each time a sea struck that side of the house. I must confess I thought this hard. I had not had a wet bunk for many months, and I had not reckoned upon it now; for although I was covered with snow, and had nothing on that could properly be called dry, it was as nothing to the idea of not having a dry place to which I could look forward for a short spell of com-

parative comfort. However, Reed, of course, sailor-fashion, made me turn into his bunk; consequently, he being in the port watch and I in the starboard, I turned in when he turned out.

Life-lines were stretched along the main-deck, and the captain made the "look-out" keep on the poop. At eight o'clock the ship was hove-to to weather out the gale for the night; and upon being brought to the wind her behaviour improved a little—not shipping so many seas in the waist, although her head was continually buried in the surf. In the morning the weather much improved, and by noon we had set the foresail, shaken the reefs out of the topsails (a difficult job, the points being frozen in with the snow as hard as wood), set the mainsail, mizzen-topsail, and maintop-gallant sail. Never were we more willing to set sail, notwithstanding it was still a head wind; patches of blue sky appeared, while the wind and sea steadily went down. Clew-lines and bunt-lines were let go, sheets hauled home, and the halyards swayed upon with a hearty "Yo, heave ho! there she rises!"

We were off Cape Barnegat, about one hundred miles from New York, and the land was visible from aloft when the weather cleared, when we discovered that the gale had blown us several miles out of our course. In the evening we tacked ship, and stood away from the land for safety, having to heave the lead every two hours during the night—a miserably cold job. "Heave the lead!" sings out the captain from the poop; and we emerge in a hurry from the snug little galley, where the captain had ordered the fire to be kept in all night for the last two nights, for the benefit of the watch on duty. Hastening along the cold frosty decks, we each take up our respective stations—on the forecastle-head, in the waist, in the main-chains, and on the poop; whilst I light the "bull's eye," giving a light whenever wanted, "arm" the lead (affixing soap in the cavity at the bottom, to bring up specimens of sand or shell, as previously explained), and see that the coils of line in the tub are all clear for running, I being responsible for this. "Bring her head well to the wind!" shouts the captain to the man at the wheel; "Well! so! keep her shak-

ing!" "All ready for'ard!" from the second mate. "All ready, sir!" is the answer. Then "Heave!" sallies forth from the officer. A short pause, during which the foremost man makes sure that the coils are all clear in his left hand; and "Watch there, watch!" is heard from the distant end of the ship in its peculiar sound, half plaintive, half sonorous. Another interval of silence, only broken by the shaking of the sails in the wind, and the occasional roll of a wave as it washes along the ship's side. "Watch there, watch!" being heard again, and from a nearer voice, tells that the second man is letting go the coil in his hand. "Watch there, watch!" nearer still, says as much for the man in the main-chains; until, finally, the weight of the line falls to the second mate on the poop, who carefully raises and lowers his arm, making certain that the lead touches the bottom and no more. The "bull's eye" is brought, the mark on the line noted, and the line, being snatched in a block in the mizzen rigging, is hauled in, the freezing water running down one's arms in the most uncomfortable manner. The lead is always hove

from the weather side in consequence of the ship's drifting to leeward, which would foul the line under the keel.

Wednesday came, but the wind did not change. It was a thorough American winter's day—the sun shining from a cloudless sky, not much wind, and a clear atmosphere, but bitterly cold whether in the sun or out. Several vessels were seen moving in different directions, and in the evening a tug-boat came alongside to offer its services, which, after a brisk debate between its skipper, our pilot, and our captain, were accepted. The hawser was soon made fast; and with the powerful aid of steam, we glided quietly through the smooth water at the rate of seven miles an hour. All hands were called to furl the sails, and before dark set in every stitch of canvas had been carefully rolled within itself, snug against all winds. The other watch then went below, while we installed ourselves in the galley, some standing, others sitting on the coal-locker and on buckets.

It was a cosy moment after the preceding hardships off Cape Barnegat. The stove fire burnt merrily, and its warmth engendered

sociability amongst us. Now we were all listening to, Smith, the Jerseyman, who spun a yarn about the times when he was aboard a blockade-runner during the American Civil War. How, one night, sorely pressed by a Confederate cruiser, they hove bales of cotton overboard to break the paddles of their enemy; who, finding their propelling power damaged, sent them, in exchange, half-a-dozen shots. "And," continued the Jerseyman, "I witnessed an awful sight. The mate, who was standing close by me at the wheel, had his head so completely severed from the body by a cannon-ball that a knife could not have done it neater. I had an unpleasant moment myself; for, taking his bleeding trunk up by the legs to heave overboard, another shot came just as I got it over the rail, cut clean through the ankles, and left me standing with only a foot in each hand, which I was glad to let go before another missile should come and carry them off together with my paws. But I had a still narrower escape than this—a literal shave: a bullet whizzed under my nose and shaved my moustache clean off, not leaving a hair behind."

Nobody questioned the veracity of any of this, for the simple reason that nobody but himself had been chased by a Confederate—not considerate—cruiser.

Then Yankee Jim (Pemberton) drew our attention next by narrating some of his whaling adventures, which he wound up by assuring us that one day the ship was lifted bodily out of the sea and thrown on her beam-ends by a whale rising under her keel, and that they would have inevitably been all lost had not the second mate driven a harpoon into the fish to windward, which they hauled upon, and thus righted the ship. "But," said "Chips," "you don't mean to say you had the strength to right a large ship?" "Why, yes," replied Pemberton, "when American sailors pull on a rope, they pull." "And," added "Chips," "when they stretch a yarn, they stretch."

"Do any of you know a ship called the George Stuart, a Yankee clipper, sailing out of New York?" asked Cavanagh, an Irishman, sitting on the coal-locker. Finding that nobody did, he continued: "she was the craft for work, and discipline, and 'cracking on.' Above her main-

royal she carried a skysail, moonsail, cloud-cleaner, star-gazer, sky-scraper, and an angel's footstool. The latter sail was only set in dead calms, and then the watch on deck were not allowed to cough or sneeze, for fear of carrying it away. The skipper never permitted us to sleep during our night-watches on deck; when we got becalmed he used to have a rope made fast to the tafferel and make the watch haul on it for'ard, as if to pull the ship along, while he whistled aft for a breeze. To show you how she could steer, I'll just tell you that one morning out at sea, it being my helm, the mate came up to me—says he, 'Do you see that black spot ahead right on our course? when we get nearer you will find it to be two rocks just sufficiently apart to allow this ship to pass between.' 'What about that, sir?' I replied. 'Well, I will undertake to put her through,' rejoined the mate. I gave him the wheel. Bowling along nine knots an hour, I looked on aghast; as we seemed bent on certain destruction. A dashing of surf, a cloud of spray, a stream of shavings fly up on either side of the vessel with a whining noise like that caused by a carpenter's

plane, and we were through. 'A tight fit,' exclaimed the mate, as I looked over at the marks of the wood grazed away on both sides." "Wal," interrupted Yankee Jim, "I guess you've 'stuck it on' at last." "No," continued Cavanagh, amidst general laughter, "we never afterwards saw any trace of it floating about."

It being my next "wheel," I wrapped myself up in all the warm things I had, returned to the galley, had half a pannikin of hot coffee, and waiting for four bells to strike (the second mate always kept the time when my wheel followed), I hastened aft to give M'Ewan a smart relief. What a beautiful frosty night! The main coast lay to our left, and Long Island to our right; and from both sides, as we sped onwards, vivid rays shot across our path from beacons and lighthouses only visible at certain angles. There being no wind, I did not feel the cold so much as on previous occasions; but nevertheless, when eight bells were struck, I watched with eager eyes for the relief. "Keep the ship's head in line with steamers' light" was the course I had been steering, and which I now passed on

to my successor, who repeated the words back to me in due form before I left him in charge. I hastened into the galley for a warm and my "whack" of coffee, already sweetened—and turned in, and was not long in dropping off asleep.

CHAPTER XV.

NEW YORK.

SUDDENLY becoming conscious that somebody was pulling my leg, I determined upon awaking, when Jack Anderson made us aware that all hands were on deck. We had arrived in the port of New York, and it was two o'clock in the morning. There were the usual noises on deck when arriving in port. The tug blowing off steam with such an infernal noise, and in such volumes as to make one wonder how so diminutive a craft is capable of the production. Then casting off the hawser and hauling it inboard, and laying it along the deck, while various boats—"customs," and others—board us. A sharp rap, instantly smothered in a deafening rattle, causing the ship to vibrate fore and

aft, tells that the anchor has been let go. At half-past two we were told we might go below again. This was Thursday, 26th February, and 110 days had elapsed since we sailed from Foochow. What a weight is felt to be taken off one's duty after the good ship has at last reached her destination, and lying at anchor! No more royals to loose in the middle watch, no more topsails to reef, no more night "wheels" and "look-outs;" a new era begins with "all night in."

We were roused out at eight o'clock, and I then had my first view of the capital of the United States of North America. Nothing very pretty or striking: on the contrary, an unvaried plainness offended the eye in all directions. Wharves, buildings in the city, neither showed any pretensions to beauty. The proportions of the harbour, however, are magnificent—its natural stateliness well atoning for the shortcomings of man's handiwork. The morning was cold, and the scenery looked cold; snow everywhere all round, and ice drifted by with the tide.

We lay here till the next morning, Friday,

stopping the coils of ropes up in the rigging, and otherwise making ready for discharging cargo, when a tug hauled us along the East River, to the wharf abutting on South Street. It makes a vast difference to a sailor whether his ship is moored alongside a wharf or in the stream: in the former case he can go ashore directly the day's work is done, and return when he likes, without asking anybody's permission; but in the latter case he must hail a boat—if there happens to be one within hearing—pay the fare, and chance the possibility of finding a boat to bring him aboard again. Indeed, the inconvenience to which Jack is put is fully proved by the fact that when "lying in the stream" he seldom troubles about going ashore, no matter how tempting the amusements there awaiting him may be.

Turning out on deck in the cold but bright frosty morning, my first impression of the Empire City was a busy one. Steamers of all shapes and sizes noisily puffed their fussy way across the harbour; and in strict accordance with the well-known rule, the smaller and more insignificant they were, the more snorting and whist-

ling they made. Ships pass and repass in tow: now a stately English clipper glides by with staysails set, looking as beautiful and as saucy as a gentleman's yacht; then follows in another direction one of those ungainly but comfortable old ships, familiarly known to nautical men as "tubs," bluff-bowed and square-sterned, built by the mile and cut off by the fathom; her fine-pointed mast-heads and "made" masts tell me she is a Yankee. Presently, in strong contrast to the meddlesome, hissing little tugs, a large Transatlantic steamer enters the scene, travelling through the water in majestic silence. An occasional brig or schooner with very white cotton sails lends a finishing touch to the panorama. Masts, yards, funnels, houses, and rigging all seem to form one along the shore. New York is built on Manhattan Island, about thirteen miles long and two miles in breadth. The Hudson River separates the western shore from the mainland, on which stands Jersey City. On the other side of the island is East River, dividing it from Long Island, where Brooklyn stands. Large ferry-boats run day and night between Brooklyn and New York. Vehicles of

all descriptions are carried across in the ferries. From the southern extremity at Battery Point, New York is pretty closely built for something like seven miles.

The accommodation for shipping in New York is of the worst description. There are no docks where ship and cargo are safe—the one from collision, the other from robbery. Here all vessels lie at wharves, which, by the by, in the majority of cases, are the most ridiculous apologies for such, and in many instances are mere jetties from the street, without gate or barrier, and without covering of any kind to protect the discharged cargo from the inclemency of the weather. Ships and steamers passed and repassed, some near, some far off; and among the most noticeable were the large ferry-boats plying between New York and Brooklyn, and the white-painted, top-heavy-looking steamers trading up-river and on the coast. The ferry-boats are remarkable for their size, shape, and the proportionate noise of their whistling, which even in the low scale of whistling is of a wretched quality, equally painful to the ears and the stomach. Besides elegantly-

fitted-up passenger-rooms, the centre consists of a roadway, which seems to form a continuation of the street when alongside the wharf. They are rather difficult to describe, considering there is nothing similar in England; but if a comparison must be drawn, I should say they bear a closer resemblance to a huge, white, floating railway-waggon with a funnel in the middle of the roof, than to anything else.

Our first job after unbattening the hatches was to send royal-yards down—I luckily not being one of those to go aloft in the cutting wind. Directly a ship is moored in a large port like this, "runners," outfitters, and others lose no time in "turning up." First a bootmaker, then a tailor enters the house or the forecastle, and with the utmost courtesy presents to such inmates as will take them, cards bearing his name and address and trade, with the usual assurance that he sells the best goods at the lowest figure. However, it is customary for the captain to name a tailor and bootmaker or a general outfitter to supply the crew, who, instead of paying for the article then, sign their name to the bill, the total being presented to

the captain for payment as soon as the "blue Peter" is seen flying at the fore (three days before sailing). Sailors cannot complain of captains carelessly paying debts they have not incurred, as the law requires when a bill is paid that the payment should be made in the presence of the man. Of course this is not carried out to the letter through Jack's "devil-may-carism;" his signature alone being deemed sufficient proof generally. This plan of furnishing goods is a reasonable one, as it induces the seaman to be less wasteful with his money. If, on the other hand, it did not exist, the hands would be continually applying to the captain for money to buy wearing apparel, which, being taken as necessary, could hardly be refused. Very little money would ever find its way to the outfitters; for even if a man really intended to make proper use of it, the temptations on the way would be too great for many ever to reach the outfitters. But by the above system the captain knows he is not stinting the men in the proper employment of their money, while at the same time he is able to limit the sum he gives to each man for pleasure

to a just amount. Some crews placed under less scrupulous but so-called jollier captains, have had the mortification to find when being discharged, on arriving home after a twelve-month's voyage, that they had nothing to receive—they had spent all their hard-earned wages out in "the country," and had nothing to show for them.

Now the "runners" are quite a different class: they pass themselves off as the sailor's friend, and foolish Jack is oftentimes stupid enough to believe them. Their profession consists in boarding ships directly they come in, and if the crew are going to be paid off, in persuading as many of its number as possible to go to their respective "boarding-house." If they are not going to be paid off, the "runner" will do his utmost to induce the sailor to run away from his ship. Fresh from the ocean, with all its privations and hardships, Jack opens his ear to his supposed friend, but real enemy, who charms him with accounts of happiness and comfort which he can offer him. A sailor is not like a mechanic ashore outdone with competition and anxious to keep his situa-

tion. The sailor knows that if he leaves his present ship, he can, if he chooses, ship in another vessel the very next day; there are always plenty of ships wanting hands. This makes him "independent" and dissatisfied with his ship, in most cases, whatever she may be. Hence it is that the "runner" has such a hold over him, knowing his chronic state of discontent. Naturally there are many steady-going men who would not allow themselves to be led away in this manner, but they only form the exception to the rule. The "runner" boards and lodges seamen so long as their money lasts. When all is gone, he hastens to ship them off again, taking care to refund himself his disbursements handsomely out of the fellow's advance. Without the advance-note system he could not exist. As it is, the "runner" is only one of many evils emanating from it.

Saturday night I went with Reed to the Bowery Theatre in the thoroughfare of the same name, where "White Hair" was performed—a highly sensational piece. I am not aware of the condition of New York in summer, but in winter, after a downfall

of snow, its streets are wellnigh impassable. New York is to London as that city is to Paris as regards cleanliness. We passed a street where the mud and slush were considerably over half a foot deep from one side of the road to the other.

That same night, or rather early in the following morning, I was awoke by somebody roughly shaking me. Three policemen and a grey-haired gentleman stood in the house, one of the former holding a lantern. A question or two was put to me, but to what purpose and what answer I gave I was too sleepy to be conscious of. Going to the galley to get the breakfast coffee, the "doctor" accosted me with: "Have you heard about Pemberton?" and on my reply in the negative, he added, "He's gone; his father and three policemen came during the night and took him away." The news soon spread about the ship, the unanimous feeling being that of "good riddance" rather than that of anger at the Yankee's impudent violation of the British flag; for, in American waters though we were, yet he was aboard a British ship, and had signed articles in a

British port, and was therefore quite without the jurisdiction of the United States. Having no chest or stock of clothing, save a bundle of rags lying in his bunk on a dirty worn-out mattress and blanket, his desertion was in no way hindered by delay in packing. However, the mate was evidently "wild;" for worthless as the runaway seaman had been, still the policemen had committed a serious offence in aiding a man to abscond from his ship without notice to the captain or to the agents, which considerably aggravated it.

Sunday morning I went to Trinity Church, Broadway, the leading one of New York, its spire being one of the few seen from the water. In the churchyard stands a monument commemorating some Yankee naval victory over the Britishers. In the afternoon M'Ewan and I went to Central Park, a prettily laid out place, but not remarkable for its collection of animals. Sir Walter Scott's monument is one of the most graceful ornaments, and has a conspicuous site.

On the Monday morning, while polishing the brass-work round the harness-casks, Pemberton

and his father stepped down on the quarter-deck; the former inquiring for the captain in a very authoritative tone, saying with laughable simplicity that he wanted his pay and discharge, forgetting that his conduct might have fully warranted his being there and then put in irons. His father entreated him to remember where he was, and not talk so loud to Mr Mason, who had that moment come out of his berth. They soon came to hot words, until, exasperated at something he said, the mate gave our ex-ordinary seaman such a shaking as made both father and son beat a hasty retreat directly the latter was free from the mate's grip. They scrambled up the gangway-steps to the topgallant rail, and hence on to the wharf; their progress being much impeded by a huge carpet-bag which the father carried. Away they ran along the wharf, father, son, and carpet-bag, till out of sight, never again to show themselves. Pemberton, instead of his old ragged garments, had on a new fashionable suit, white shirt, and wide-awake hat, and had evidently severed all connection with the sea. In explanation of the night-raid of the police,

it was rumoured that Pemberton had written to his father complaining of ill-treatment aboard a "lime-juicer," who, satisfied that his son was the victim of gross cruelty, had asked for the assistance of the police, whose underhand conduct is anything but creditable to American justice.

For the greater part of two days a heavy snowstorm swept over the city, thanks to which we were called on deck at daylight to clear away the snow with shovels, brooms, and "squeegees." Our hundreds of tons of tea were being discharged as fast as circumstances would permit. Steam-cranes are the exception at the wharves; therefore we had to content ourselves with the employment of "lumpers," in which respect New York ranks after Sydney. These lumpers discharge and stow cargoes, and are mostly seafaring men. The duty of us apprentices was not tiring, although cold. We were all three stationed on the wharf to guard the valuable chests and boxes from thieves, who frequently show a lamentable display of ingenuity. I was told that upon one occasion they got a boat between the piles under the

wharf, cut a hole in the planks, and in that manner walked off, or rather pulled off, with several chests of tea without being detected. I was stationed near the water, Reed amidships, and M'Ewan near the roadway, only being relieved for meals.

One evening, not feeling disposed to go ashore, I lit my pipe, and having obtained the 'New York Tribune,' was preparing to spend the evening in the forecastle, where the captain had been good enough to place a stove, when, to my surprise, who should come tumbling in at the door but my American friend, whose acquaintance I had made in Shanghai, and whose ship, the Sea Serpent, had arrived a week prior to us. Nothing would do but I must accompany him to the theatre. He had only heard that morning that we were in port. He told me that the Hopewell was also in from Shanghai, and that he would fetch Robertson (apprentice) down with him one evening. We went to "Tony Pastor's," in the Bowery, a sort of New York music-hall, the songs and general style being precisely the same as in London. Another night Bradford (my American

friend), Robertson, and myself started off for the so-called Grand Opera House; but the difficulty we experienced in getting there was, to say the least, amusing. Bradford, a native of Boston, easily persuaded us to let him act as pilot. Firstly, we found ourselves in a car travelling in the opposite direction, then alighting, we lost our way; and when at last we found it again, together with the right car, we entered the wrong theatre, paid for our seats, and only discovered our mistake by a lot of black fellows coming on the stage—a nigger performance. Disgusted, but not discouraged, we left the place, sacrificed our money, and continued the search for the Grand Opera House, which we were told was two "blocks" further on. This time we did find the long-sought-for theatre; but having paid for our places, were mortified to find that the piece we had come expressly to see was finished.

I had arranged with Bradford to go the following Sunday with him to a fashionable church, I forget the name; but I was prevented joining him by a most unpleasant accident. With my best clothes on, glittering with gilt

buttons, I considered myself a tolerable swell, and was in the act of crossing the road at the top of the wharf, when a false step, a slip and splash, and I fell full length on my side in the gutter. I felt in a condensed state of confusion; reluctantly regaining my footing (for I was quite ashamed to stand up again), I remained for a few seconds undecided what to do, the laughing-stock of passers-by, when I ran back to the ship with all possible speed. A rapid thaw had set in the previous day after the heavy fall of snow, and the road was deep in liquid mud. I was well contented to pass the remainder of the day aboard, while my clothes hung in the rigging drying. Having received no letters here, I obtained leave one day to go to the post-office; but neither there, nor at the British Consulate, nor at our agents, did I find trace of any.

Broadway, the finest street in New York, is about the width of Regent Street; but notwithstanding the houses are higher, they are mostly of plain brick. The street presents a peculiar combination of Oxford Street, Cheapside, and Whitechapel, with the dash of Regent Street.

At the bottom of Broadway, and abutting on the water, stands Castle Garden, of emigration celebrity. Erected here is a large building of a circular shape for the accommodation of immigrants.

I went with Bradford to see Gilbert's play of "Charity" at the Fifth Avenue theatre, the most fashionable house in New York. The place was densely crowded, and the acting good.

It became known that we were chartered for London with a cargo of wheat and rosin; and as the tea went out at one end of the ship, so our London freight came in at the other. The rapidity with which they load grain is surprising. A high wooden machine called an "elevator" is moored alongside, which pumps the grain up in some way, and sends it down a tube leading into the hold. At the mouth of this tube, and in the 'tween-decks, are stationed a gang of men. One attends the turning on and off of the shoot, others fill the bags, while some busily sew up the opening with remarkable dexterity; they then fall to the hands of the lumpers, who have their work cut out in preventing the filled bags accumulating. The

reason that so many small vessels take their cargo in bulk is, that it does away with the cost of bags, and saves time in stowage. But the risk at sea is very great; indeed, had our cargo been shipped in bulk, the good Sea Queen and her crew would never have seen Old England.

There is a class of men who make it their business to visit ships coming from the East to buy "curios;" they are particularly anxious for Japanese cabinets, Chinese pagodas, fancy boxes of tea, and little birds from Java or St Helena; and, as a rule, the prices they offer fully repay Jack, if selling is his purpose.

We were visited one evening by a professional tattooer, who showed us a book containing drawings of the different marks and designs most in favour with sailors. He undertook to prick in any one design for a dollar; but nobody honoured him with an order, as sailors generally prefer having the operation performed by a shipmate at sea. Although the sailor's character is changing in more ways than one, he still tattooes as heavily as ever he did, and perhaps with increased art. There

are certain tattoo-marks universally met with at sea: such as the crucifixion, or the cross simply; the anchor in a wreath with or without a crown; the dancing ballet-girl; the bracelet round the wrist and rings on the fingers; and the ship under all plain sail. This last one is often tattooed right across the chest, which, being bare with a man-of-war's-man, sometimes falls under the gaze of the ordinary public in the streets. To tattoo, a couple of needles are secured with twine to a little stick, and by their means the skin and flesh are cut and lacerated, until the blood flows freely. With a small brush or a piece of wood the black or red colour is then laid on the wound, which is afterwards washed clean with cold water. It is a curious fact, that no matter how rapid one may be at washing the colour off the cut flesh after it is applied, no amount of sponging or bathing will ever get it out. The wound seems to absorb the colour instantly. Coloured seamen are as highly pictured as their white brethren, notwithstanding that the lines are somewhat faint on their dark skin. They indulge more in the sentimental.

Our date for sailing was drawing near, and the cold, which had lately shown a tendency to give way to warmer weather, again returned with renewed vigour. Ton after ton of wheat went pouring into the bags, and deeper and deeper we sank in the water. New York shippers are notorious for the extent to which they overload grain-vessels bound across the Atlantic; and they seemed determined to make no exception of us. Charley Baker, and one or two other "old shells," growled at the quantity being taken aboard; and there was some talk in the forecastle about "some people" wishing themselves "out of her." When at last the final bag had been filled and stowed, and we received orders to batten down the hatches, I felt uneasy. I had never seen the ship so deep before by a long way, and the manner in which "Chips" secured the tarpaulins did not reassure me: such hammering, nailing, and tarring as would have induced many persons to believe we were going under the sea, and not over it A grain cargo is essentially a "dead" cargo. A grain-laden ship has no life; she neither rises to meet the sea, nor gives under its

crashing shock; she cuts clean through everything.

Cavanagh was granted his discharge, another able seaman being shipped in his place, while a new ordinary seaman filled the vacancy created by Pemberton. Two cabin berths were being cleaned and fitted up for a couple of passengers — young Americans — who were eccentric enough to wish to try crossing the Atlantic in a clipper ship during the winter season. They paid dearly for their temerity.

CHAPTER XVI.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

Friday, 13th March.—At noon we cast off our moorings, and glided out into the stream in charge of a tug. The weather was disheartening: half a gale blowing, and hard frost. Somehow or other there seemed to be no spirit in us. Lashings were rove and spars secured in silence: our two passengers were, nevertheless, highly interested in our movements, as they walked the poop with the captain.

As we proceeded along the harbour, a cold spray would now and again fly across the deck: each one seemed to have a malicious pleasure in wetting us; while a quarrelsome sea from time to time washing along our apology for a free-board, streamed over the covering-board,

and froze on deck. Then we had the anchors to secure at the bows (we did not take them inboard). We soon got so cold, exposed to the full force of the wind on the forecastle-head, that all hands were called aft for grog. The fishing-smacks and other little craft coming in from the open were literally encased in ice, even to the helmsmen, who, in their ice-clad oilskins, appeared to be built up from the deck.

We had just done dinner when the mate's voice was heard, "Loose the topsails!" and a moment afterwards I was in the fore-rigging, climbing up to the yard. The tugboat then cast off and left us to take care of ourselves—having come to the mouth of the harbour. The cold made me very giddy, and after I had cast off the bunt-gasket it was only with the greatest difficulty that I succeeded in lying out on the yard to cast off the others. Overhauling the bunt-lines, clew-lines, and reef-tackles, I scrambled and slid down on deck with my strength frozen out of me. "Hoist away, my lads!" sang out the mate; "Slide her up for London river!" "Yo heave, ho-o-o! there she rises!" responded the foremost hand on the hal-

yards, keeping time "hand over fist." "Belay there; clap on the sheets!" shouted the mate. With both sheets home, we returned to the halyards, tautened the leaches, and made fast. The same process with the main and mizzen. The ship, sniffing the breeze, bounded and rolled in the foam, gladdened by her freedom from the tugboat-hawser. The wind was on the quarter, but strong; nevertheless the captain, after discharging the pilot, gave her the foresail, mainsail, and maintop-gallant sail. We ploughed along, now diving, now leaping, but not as we should have done with another cargo, rising up one side of a wave and gliding down the other. From moment to moment a loud rumbling noise crept from forward aft, and with it a rush of water in between the bulwarks and covering-board, which froze like thawing snow in pouring across the deck. A noisy stagger and a sharp thud, accompanied by a savage shriek, continually told of some unlucky fellow with a too confident footing. Heugh! roared out George, as a sudden lurch covered him half way up to the knees in water. "Look out, doctor!" sings out a man in the weather main-

rigging to the cook hurrying back to the galley from a fresh-water cask abaft the main hatchway, from whence he is carrying a bucket filled. Too late. Bang, whish! a sea strikes the ship's side, and leaping up, scatters itself on deck, and in the fresh-water bucket—a compliment acknowledged by the "doctor" with a groan.

During the afternoon we secured with stout lashings the quarter-boat to the davits, and afterwards made an attempt at sweeping the quarter-deck. That finished the day's work—the first out from New York. We seemed without mistake a half dead and alive "crowd." We never put to sea before with gloomier faces. And bound to London—a port where we had all been longing to be for many months back. How we had all talked in Foo-chow about what we should do in London, when there was a possibility of our being freighted for there—what plans!—nobody, of course, was coming back to sea any more, excepting Scottie and George. "No more of your voyages to the southward," said the former; "give me the Mediterranean—home every two months." George reckoned on getting employment in a fishing-smack sailing

out of Whitstable, on the Kentish coast, belonging to a relation. "This is my last voyage" might then have been heard upon all sides. Now that no more doubt attached to the matter—now that the Sea Queen was in reality bound across the Atlantic home, all hands were alike attacked with the "blues." I know no one was any the less anxious to get to England because we were drawing so near. The plain fact was, a hard time of it was anticipated before we reached there. Bad time of the year, a ship deeply overladen with a dead cargo; and, as we subsequently found to our cost, badly stowed. Going below to tea, the house looked misery itself; water streamed from one side to the other, rippling and murmuring between the battens of our chests like a young river. A quiver, a violent thud, and a sea rolls forward along the deck. We instantly slam the lee door; but the sea defiantly rushes in through the cracks of the door and the lee scupper-hole. Once in, it takes a long while running out, no longer impelled by the same pressure, and liable at any time to have its volume increased by another. We therefore

decided to keep the lee door open and take our chance, according full liberty to our aqueous enemy of admittance and exit. But another intruder, only less unwelcome than the first, profited by the arrangement to make its invisible presence felt—the wind. Swooping down the lee side of the foresail, it came whistling in at the door, threatening to extinguish the lamp. The elements were testing the maximum limit of our physical endurance. If we succeeded in carrying our meals from the galley without having them washed away, the cold was almost too great to allow us to eat them. Wretched as we were, we more than once laughed at the noise each other's teeth made in clattering against pannikin and spoon. The situation, shivering on our chests, with the icy water playing over our no less icy feet, while endeavouring to eat a meal of which a London pauper would have said with justice, "Thank you for nothing," would have been indescribably ridiculous were it not so inexpressibly real in its severity.

The following morning, our watch on deck, Reed and I were ordered at daylight to clear

the ice and snow off the poop (M'Ewan had been shifted into the mate's watch and Reed into ours). The two passengers were there taking their—shall I say in such weather constitutional? They had not their sea-legs on yet, and their floundering and staggering somewhat enlivened our work. What a dreary spectacle the bleak Atlantic did look, to be sure, in the cold grey morning! A true wilderness of waves, sullenly rolling in lead-coloured masses fringed with white, streaked with foam, and battering past the ship with a grim indifference. Standing on the poop, the bow seemed to fly high in the air, then slewing aside, would dive down as if going to the bottom stem on. Another heave, a moment's indecision in the air, a fearfully rapid plunge and crash! the jib-boom and forecastle-head are lost to sight in the seething waters, white with rage, which pour boiling and writhing over along the main-deck, lifting the coils of ropes off the pins and strewing their full length aft, forming of them a heap of knots and kinks for us to clear, and get a soaking into the bargain. Naturally, no work was carried on during the day other than what was

urgent—a splice in a sheet, or putting a new strand in some rope; and this had to be done either in the rigging or on the poop.

Day after day passed by, and we had thus far been very fortunate. The wind held fair, although shifting occasionally a few points, and kept at about the same pressure—that of a strong top-gallant breeze. My bunk and bedding, too, which I had managed to dry in New York, were still in the same satisfactory condition. Several of the poor fellows in the forecastle, less lucky, were driven out of their bunks by the water that trickled down in streams,

"From pawl-bitts and cat-tails, and likewise half-caulked seams:
It wets one's bedding through and through; but then what matters that?
For leaky ships don't come within the medium of the Act."
—*Merchant S. Act Song.*

I began to notice that three fingers and my nose were three parts frost-bitten, by the peculiar itching and loss of feeling which I experienced in those parts. Phillips had his left-hand fingers badly frost-bitten, which grew so much worse that he remained below unfit for work the whole of the passage. As for me, I con-

tinually rubbed nose and fingers in snow, and so prevented them getting worse. The captain ordered the galley-fire to be kept in all night, and hot coffee at midnight for all hands. Only a sailor can realise the full cheer and comfort that this bestows on him. Going below, say for the first watch at 8 P.M., we would empty the water out of our sea-boots, take off our stockings, wring them, and hand them to one of the fellows on deck to hang in the galley to dry. Then, divesting ourselves of the remainder of our wet clothing, we turn in on the bare mattress and under all the blankets (too cold to spare one to lie on), quite indifferent to the noise of the water, as, with innocent playfulness, it chases itself in at the door, over spare boots, under the chests, round the house, and out again—sometimes smuggling a boot away, sometimes not, but gurgling all the while as if laughing at its own artfulness. Reed and I doze off asleep for three and a half hours.

Midnight comes, and with it "Sleepers ahoy, there! Come—eight bells—turn out!" Feeling immeasurably worse than before we went off asleep, we reluctantly put on our cold wet

clothing again, knock at the galley bulkhead and sing out for our stockings, and then hasten into the galley, chancing the seas, for our "whack" of coffee, and to enjoy the warmth of the stove. A snug little place that galley, under the circumstances. True, there was no pretension to dryness; the brick flooring rivalled the house and the forecastle for wetness, but the fire compensated for that and all other evils. If I had no "wheel" or "look-out" during the watch, I took the second mate his half-pannikin of coffee, and remained in the galley till about time to strike two bells, which having done, I returned, and "chocking" a bucket in a corner, kept the others company in sleep till eight bells (4 A.M.). This was the bright side of a night-watch on the wintry Atlantic.

Another night saw us turning out of our bunks to relieve the watch, and without time for coffee, picking our way aft in the darkness to the cross-jack braces. No sooner there, but a sea comes tumbling over the quarter-deck, making us spring for very safety up the rigging, and half drowning those who were not quick

enough. The impetuous waters, glittering in phosphorescence, sweep under us, and we descend and resume our hauling before the threatening waves repeat their attack. Hard times, indeed—but harder times were in store. Hope buoys up the sailor like other men, but to a higher degree; he is ever thinking the worst is reached, and so he works and toils, exposed to danger and hardship, hoping on, and never despairing.

March 20th, a strong westerly gale arose. We stowed the maintop-gallant sail, mainsail, and mizzen upper topsail, in a piping hail-storm. The frightened ship, staggering under the blast, forged into the sea, bows under, in a manner terrible to witness from aloft. The whole fore part of the ship would sink into the foam; and many thought of their chests—their sole worldly possession, enclosing, besides good clothing, all they valued the most, all that was dear. Jack has more of sterling good in his chest than lands-people credit him with—relics of past voyages; bygone years' little gifts from home, perhaps given when a boy, and to which he clings fondly, though he may not have seen

that home for many long years. Then his Poll is brought to his mind by more than one little article appealing to his more tender feelings, always occupying the same place in the till of his chest. Should he happen to be a married man, his affection for his chest is naturally multiplied.

This was our first meeting with the dreaded North Atlantic weather, and with it went our last comfort—dryness. Nothing but wet clothing and wet bedding to look forward to for the rest of the passage. Still rougher weather awaited us—such weather as I had never yet experienced at sea. The next day a dense fog, with a high sea, surrounded us, and we were obliged in consequence to shorten canvas, keeping a sharp look-out, with fog-horn constantly going. Tremendous seas broke over us day and night, threatening the life of any one who chanced to be on the main-deck, and striking the weather side of our abode with dangerous force. But far more serious was the leak which had lately sprung by the stern-post, and which all the efforts of "Chips" had failed to stop. Simultaneously a marked list a-port showed

that the cargo had shifted. The dreaded pumping was our only chance. At the end of each watch, fresh hands relieved the others. With each a rope round his waist, and secured to the weather bulwarks, we stood working at the pumps, ready at the first sight of a towering wave to spring on the fife-rail, and cling to the topsail or top-gallant sheets.

But at night, when the seas came screened in the darkness, we suffered the most. Furious seas, dashing down upon and completely burying us, left us breathless at the mercy of the next. It was terrible work. To add to our misfortunes, the water in the hold causing the grain to swell, burst some bags, which disabled the pumps, and nearly choked them. This entailed double work to keep the leak under. A sea tumbling in at the door one night, splashed into my bunk, and made it henceforth useless. Reed's bunk, although on the lee side, being a top one, escaped with but little damage. I turned into M'Ewan's when he turned out. His was the driest in the house, only suffering from a leak round the port, which I diminished by nailing canvas outside.

Saturday, 21st March, we had a bad night, the gale still blowing hard, with hail and snow. All hands were called to reef topsails at midnight. The seas were more violent than ever, making a clean breach of the main-deck; had it not been a question of duty, no one would have dared to venture along it. Our safest place was up aloft; there, at any rate, no sea could carry us away, though the wind, with misplaced energy, strove hard to do as much. Nowhere else had I seen such seas; even those off the Cape of Good Hope in the winter time fell into insignificance when compared to them.

Just before we reefed the topsails, I helped the second mate to sound the pumps. This is done by lowering down the "well" a line, attached to the end of which is an iron rod, chalked over, and marked in feet and inches. As high as the chalk is wetted there is depth of water in the hold. To our mutual dismay, upon hauling up the rod, instead of a few inches we found five feet. By the light of the "bull's eye" we stared at one another; a few hours more, and we should be on our way to the bottom—ship and crew. A second try brought

the same result, and a third. But a fourth only shewed the chalk wet up to fifteen inches, which was confirmed by a fifth. This reassured us; but we could not account for the great difference between the first and the last attempt—the rod being carefully re-chalked each time—unless it were that the sides of the shaft wetted it. Soundings were taken as usual every two hours, and the pumps were kept going whenever the seas would permit it.

Sunday morning the wind abated to a certain extent, which allowed us to set the foresail. It still blew from aft, we consequently running before it under square yards. In the afternoon we passed a French bark hove-to and labouring heavily. It was what any one else but a sailor would have called a grand sight. Now we were in full sight of each other, plunging and heaving on the crest of a huge wave; then both would sink out of sight deep in a watery valley. The great Atlantic rollers were doubtless grand, their colossal proportions being revealed by the presence of the tiny bark.

The evening closed in fine—the only really fine night that we had seen yet. We had set

everything up to a mizzen-top-gallant sail. The clouds were no more to be seen, and the dark-blue heavens showed a myriad of twinkling stars, which lit up our barely-filled sails, while the angry sea, which had much gone down, lazily rolled over and over as if completely exhausted, and henceforth bent on peace. Grog was served out at eight o'clock: and as the ship lurched in the "fine-weather rolls," her masts creaking as in the quiet tropics, nobody looked back to the past; all thoughts were for a bright ending to our hitherto stormy passage.

It was our first watch, and consequently our morning watch below. We were called on deck at 8 A.M. by "All hands furl sails!" When we were called at 7.20 A.M. for our breakfasts, we noticed a sad change in the treacherous weather. More clouds, more heavy sea, more wind; the previous tranquil night seemed like a fairy dream. This was Monday, 23d March. It appears that shortly after the port watch had relieved us, the mate ordered in the top-gallant sails. The hands thought he had taken leave of his senses for a spell, as there was very little wind and a clear sky;

but they did not notice that little black gathering on our lee quarter. We furled the upper main-topsail, mainsail, and foresail, with more than the habitual amount of growling. Notwithstanding it was piping fresh, we could not see the use of taking off all this sail, especially the foresail. "Heave her to, cap'n!" "She's going too fast!" "She'll chafe her copper away!" "Make a two-months' passage of it, cap'n!" were some of the various exclamations muttered ironically by the men. Being on our starboard quarter, the wind was fair; and although we were only under upper and lower fore-topsails and lower main-topsail, we forged through the water, dashing into the foam boom under, and shivering with the shock from stem to stern. The sea rapidly rose, and the dark indigo and brown clouds overhead flew scudding like ourselves before the gale. I had a "wheel" from 10 to 12 A.M., but an A.B. was ordered to take the weather side. The perspiration ran down our faces in our endeavours to keep her before the wind; for such was the new steering order, the captain preferring to run three points off his course

rather than chance the possibility of shipping one of the enormous waves which were running a life-and-death race with us.

In scudding before a gale two things are essential: Firstly, that the ship's pace should at least equal that of the waves; secondly, that her head should be kept straight before the wind. Now, if the ship's speed should be slower than the waves, the latter would break over her stern, cause the vessel to "broach-to," and place her in imminent peril of foundering. Hence it is that although a gale may spring up from a fair quarter, captains invariably prefer "heaving to" rather than running the risk of "scudding," and then being unable, from the heavy sea, to bring her head to wind. It is perhaps unnecessary to say anything about the extreme difficulty of steering a ship under those circumstances, as it is but too obvious. With the pressure all aft, the waves dashing against the rudder and quarters, and slewing the former from side to side as a child does a shuttlecock, the wheel not unfrequently becomes uncontrollable, throwing and maiming the men as it flies round with fearful velocity.

The gale increasing in fury, we shortened sail to main lower topsail and fore-topmast-staysail in the afternoon. The roar of the wind as it tore through the rigging would have silenced heavy artillery. Such howling, whining, groaning, and roaring I had never heard before. We began to see that things were getting serious, and that the mate had been right in his forecasting. A hurricane was coming on. Mountainous seas rolled along over the bulwarks as if licking their prey. The spars on deck, and particularly a huge spare lower mast, lashed on the port side, got loosened from their lashings, and gave us infinite trouble to secure again. Taken aboard for our safety, they now became a source of danger. No man was safe for a moment on the main-deck where we stood, yet those spars must be secured; there was no alternative. The second mate procured new lashings. We watch our opportunity, and succeed in partly reeving them through the ring-bolts. Broroum! an immense sea tumbles over. We let go everything, and each one struggles in the foam on his own account — now above the spare lower mast,

now under it, the unwieldy log doing its utmost to crush us. We scramble into the rigging and wait panting for another chance. Again and again we are submerged and thrown off our legs, which are only saved from being crushed by the spar's buoyancy. The men, exhausted, refuse to try any more. In vain the second mate (who acted with much spirit all through) jumped on deck again, barefooted, and gesticulated in anger to the men: his voice was lost in the storm, and they cared not for his threatening fist. I stood on the bitts, clinging to the shear-pole in the forerigging, waiting for the men to make a start, which they did when they saw the officer working alone. This time we succeeded in reeving the lashings through the ring-bolts by the main-hatch and the side of the house, and waiting for a sea to float the spar up to us, we immediately took a turn round it, and there lashed it.

At six o'clock the captain resolved to heave the ship to, as we no longer could keep ahead of the sea. Of course all hands were on deck, or rather in the rigging, and as we trimmed the

yards up, and the ship's head was brought to the wind, we shipped the most fearful seas. Tons upon tons rolled on the main-deck and over the hatchways, which were only saved from being stove in there and then by the labour "Chips" had bestowed on them in New York. We hove to under main lower topsail and fore-topmast-staysail. It was now piping a hard gale, with a deafening roar; nothing but a black and grey mass overhead and all round us. The sea ran nearly forty feet high, and continually swept over the ship. I went below at about 7 P.M. to get something to eat. The ship rolled so much, and the water was so deep in the house, that I found the act of eating a difficult operation. My chest literally floated under me. To feel hungry under such circumstances, and on such conditions, seemed to me, to say the least, somewhat out of place. After swallowing a few mouthfuls of biscuit and pork, I sat down on my chest listening to the howling of the storm outside, and the beating of the seas against the house. I had my oilskins and sou'-wester on to be ready at a moment's call. Reed was not with me; my

only companion was the smoky lamp, which, suspended by its perpendicular chain, seemed bent upon touching the roof. After a time, somebody struck eight bells, which I just managed to hear. It was my "look-out" from 8 to 10 P.M., and having noticed what terrific seas swept over the forecastle-head, I jumped on a large empty iron tank placed between the fore end of the house and abaft the foremast, where, grasping the mainstay, I installed myself as I thought for the next two hours. I relieved nobody, neither had I seen a soul since seven o'clock, and I began to wonder where all the hands could be.

It was now blowing a perfect hurricane. Never had I witnessed the like before, and never could I have supposed it possible on earth; as for the roar of wind and sea, it was simply hellish. There was something demoniacal about it which I cannot express in words. The elements seemed worked by evil spirits whose sole aim was our destruction. As I stood there alone and observed the boiling foam sweeping over the forecastle-head, and at intervals, amidst the fiendish howl of

the storm, heard the booming thud of the seas as they fell, ponderous in weight, on the quarter-deck and in the waist, the big ship's bell close by, with the rolling of the poor ship, tolled in mournful cadence. Suddenly one of the mighty grey and black phantoms, which had been hovering by the ship where I stood, towered up like a wild animal taking its spring. Lit up with phosphorescence I saw it coming, and I instinctively clutched the mainstay with all my strength. A fearful crash, a shiver of the stay, and the tank flies from under my feet, leaving me suspended to the mainstay up to the waist in the seething water. I began to think it no joke. I had had a narrow escape, and I determined so soon as the water receded to beat a hasty retreat aft, let the captain say what he might. I let go my hold, landed on deck, ran along by the weather bulwarks, hanging on to the fore-braces and main-rigging, and, judging my chance to run across to the poop-ladder, I let go. The vessel gave a lurch, I lost my footing, and went sliding into the water to leeward. At the same time a heavy sea pouring over to

windward swept me across the quarter-deck and back again, following the roll of the ship. It was like a whirlpool; floating objects touched me, and I passed once very near the handspike-rack, but I could clutch at nothing. Presently a rapid flow of the water met a furious wave, and I went overboard. I knew it would be useless to cry out; and indeed I was too choked with the water to attempt it. I felt myself carried up and then launched head-foremost—somewhere. I seized the poop-ladder rail, which was before me, and sang out. The chance of escape renewed my forces, and if ever I exerted my vocal powers it was then. I experienced a firm grasp round my arm. The second mate and Smith had heard me. With their help I succeeded in reaching the poop generally uncomfortable and frightened in no small degree. Here were all the hands. Under the lee of the weather-cloth in the mizzen-rigging were grouped captain, chief mate, and men, lashed or firmly holding on to the shrouds. The captain gave me a vacant look as I took up a place beside him, and the mate said something to the

effect that I ought never to have remained for'ard.

Though the hurricane was not yet at its height, it was something terrible—one continuous report of heavy artillery, mingled with whining, groaning, and shrieking. Immense seas swept over the main-deck, making themselves heard above the storm, and dashing up to the maintop. Beyond, all was darkness and foam. Mountains of water surrounded us, their tops being blown off into smoky spray, just as a flame is before a blowpipe. Owing to our list to port, and that side being also the lee side, we were nearly on our beam-ends; in fact, the lee side of the poop was at times under water. A big sea to leeward dashed the quarter-boat on the davits into splint-wood, yet leaving some pieces held by chains and gear sufficiently large to damage the ship's side by their beating. The captain ordered them to be cut away. Jack Anderson let himself down by a rope into the raging surf, and braving all danger, cleared away the wreckage.

The hurricane increased in violence. No imagination could portray the scene. The ship

still laboured under the main lower topsail and fore-topmast-staysail. It was more than she could bear. The main-deck was under water; mountainous waves dashing over and over from side to side, as if no ship existed there at all. The ship was actually being forced down by the extraordinary pressure of the wind. Evidently she could bear up no longer—the sails must be taken off. But how? Both were brand-new and very strong, and seemed to defy the gale. A dim explosion struck our ears. We knew what had happened—the fore-topmast-staysail had blown to rags. The ship showed relief; but our eyes were directed on the topsail, earnestly wishing for it the same fate. The mate shouted into the captain's ear that the topsail must be taken off, or the vessel would founder. There remained no time to deliberate. Immediate action behoved us—our lives depended on it. The only means of taking off the sail was by letting go the weather-sheet, and this could only be carried out by a man getting to the mast where the sheet was belayed, which was iron, and therefore could not be cut. No one was willing to

undertake the job. At last Jack Anderson, the Swede, as good a seaman as ever trod a ship's deck, volunteered. Clutching his knife between his teeth, he sprang over the rail and along the boats, when a huge sea broke over him. In a few minutes a fearful report told of Jack's success—he had let rip the sheet, and the ship worked easier. Unfortunately, the sudden breaking of the strain carried away the weather main-lift, leaving the mainyard at the mercy of each roll. We saw the white topsail, in the chaos of darkness, fly into smithereens, and vanish like a phantom.

Our last sail had gone; we were a helpless log at the mercy of the storm. The mate, who was standing close behind me, got really scared, and swore the ship would not live out the night. George and Smith were anxiously watching the spare lower-mast, which had again got adrift, and was driving at the lee bulwarks like a battering-ram. Jack Anderson, who by some means had managed to travel forward, reported that the fore-hatch tarpaulins were washed away, and that the sea was tumbling down the hold. "Chips," George, and another man went

to replace, at their imminent peril, new tarpaulins. They were all three knocked down to leeward, and George, getting his leg jammed beneath the spare lower-mast, was carried away senseless; but they succeeded in covering the hatchway.

The tempest roared, the insatiable ocean rolled over us in savage joy, and with our only available boat gone, we stood in mute despair waiting for the worst. Suddenly I felt a tap, or more properly, a shove on the shoulder. Could I believe myself? Was I labouring under some horrible nightmare? The mate was drunk! He had drowned his fear in whisky. His idiotic grin, like that of a maniac, seemed so sickening and repulsive under the circumstances, that I do not think the sudden appearance of Old Nick and all the fiendish staff of Hades would have horrified me more. I understood him to say that the captain's orders were that anybody feeling cold might go down to the cuddy and take a "swig." I felt cold standing in my dripping clothes and went below. The water was up to my knees in the cuddy, and the two wretched passengers,

whom the captain refused to allow on deck, lay in their bunks, cabin-doors open, half crazy with fright.

At 3 A.M. a lull occurred; shortly after a star was seen directly overhead. The worst had come and gone. But what a sight at daybreak! We appeared to have been in some terrible battle, through a storm of shot and shell. Most of the lee bulwarks and part of the weather were washed away. The break of the forecastle and the break of the poop were stove in by the spars, and the paint-locker cleared of all its tins and pots, which, dashing along the deck and inside the forecastle, had besmeared everything all imaginable colours. The rigging was all adrift. Irish pennants ruled the day, and ropes were towing overboard all round. The lee bunks in the forecastle had been completely washed away, together with most of the bedding, and several chests were dashed to pieces. The sea had attacked our abode with less fury, still it presented a desolate aspect. My poor chest floated bottom up; how lucky I thought of locking it! My bedding was soaked through and through. The

locker had been cleaned of its contents, which were strewed about everywhere, now and again laid bare by the water. Oil-bottle, vinegar ditto, and various other bottles of more or less use, were represented by a mere quantity of broken glass; whilst tin plates, pannikins, and iron spoons had long since bolted into the Atlantic in search of our hair and tooth brushes, pipes, and all our other nicknacks, besides clothing not locked in our chests.

It still blew a gale of wind, and the ship sank every hour deeper in the water. The leak had increased during the night, and no one dared go near the pumps. To add to our misfortunes, we were three hands short: Phillips with his frost-bitten hand growing worse; George unable to stand; and the A.B. shipped in New York laid up with illness. There was but one alternative from foundering in mid-ocean, and at noon the word was passed along, "All hands heave cargo overboard!" We hurried down the companion-ladder to carry out the order; but there was no confusion. Some cleared away the remnants of settees, and

chairs, and boxes, while others unbattened the cabin hatchway. I stood by keeping tally of the bags of wheat as they passed up from the hold in rapid succession to the poop, where, reaching the hands of two men lashed to the tafferel, they were flung overboard. Barring the furious rolling of the vessel, everything looked as matter-of-fact as if discharging cargo alongside a London dock's jetty. The usual angry tones were heard, now from the owner of a pinched finger, now from those below cursing the stupidity of those above who had hoisted up a bag against the coamings of the hatch. Several of the miserably-stitched bags burst in transit, scattering the grain far and near. Twenty-five tons went overboard that day, twelve tons the next, and about fifteen tons of rosin from the fore-hatch — in all, over fifty tons of cargo. Not very pleasing either for the shippers or the consignees, but we had saved the Sea Queen. The crew commissioned me to write out a protest, seconding the captain in the action he had taken, which was handed him.

At the end of three days and nights the gale

moderated into heavy occasional squalls. How we lived, how we ate, and how we slept during that time, may be more easily imagined than described. M'Ewan and I occupied his bunk turn about, and Reed turned in somewhere in the forecastle. It was a cause for wonder that the house had not been washed away. More than once I sprang up in the bunk as a tremendous sea fell over the house, thinking the precise moment had come at a very unfortunate time.

On the 25th March, Wednesday, the ship was wore round upon her course under the main-upper-topsail and foresail with square yards. These and the mainsail were the only sails left intact; all the rest had been blown out from the gaskets. Running before the wind and a mountainous sea, we were absolutely compelled to keep on for fear of being swamped. A black cloud is seen to windward casting its ominous shade over the waves, which under its influence came tossing and rolling on to us, foaming and wild-looking. A mighty blast—the masts creak, the rigging rattles, and the ship staggers along overcome

with its violence. "Keep her before it!" sings out the captain to the man at the wheel, the wind being two points on the starboard quarter. Onward we tear, literally ploughing the sea, which pours over the forecastle-head and along the deck. Our eyes are on the foresail; we watch the sheet further strengthened by tackles —will it stand it? Presently the wind abates its force, the black cloud passes over, and we once more come up to our course.

In the forenoon a large steamer, which had been observed sailing in an opposite direction to us, about ten miles off, bore down upon us to ascertain whether we required any assistance. We replied in the negative, with thanks. We all considered it very courteous of their captain to come so far out of his course to help us. We certainly looked in a sorry condition; and we passed several pieces of wreckage. This lasted on and off for two days more; and by Friday the 27th, the weather had so far ameliorated into a stiff breeze from W.S.W. to W.N.W., that we were enabled to bend new sails. Almost all the clothes aboard were either half spoilt or washed away. Our unfortunate

passengers' outfits were completely ruined; such a combination of remains of shirts, clothes, gloves, and paper collars reduced to pulp, as would have set up a rag-shop. They assured the captain that they had had enough of the Atlantic in a sailing vessel to last them a moderate lifetime, and solemnly asserted they would never cross it again otherwise than in a Cunard steamer.

Having had our portside-light washed overboard, we contrived to make the anchor light do by cutting off a piece of the red fly of the ensign and tying it round the glass. Wednesday, 1st April, we sighted the Lizard Light at 3 A.M.; Old England at last! The cheering and long-expected Light gladdened all hearts, and put an end to all doubts concerning our distance from land, as the captain had not been able lately to "take" the sun. How we speculated on the probable day for arriving in the Thames, in the docks; what happy excitement! Our stormy passage had smothered those warm-hearted feelings and expressions of mutual friendship so common to sailors when nearing home; but they burst forth at the first visible

proof of the old country's nearness. Old quarrels are made up, vexatious questions settled, and everything is squared up as an appropriate ending to a long voyage. One would fancy by the different seamen's talk that not one of them would ever think of coming back to sea again. But it is a false impression: the sailor is no sooner in dock than he has forgotten all he has said, and is just as careless and happy-go-lucky as when he came off the preceding voyage, and the one before that.

We were all anxiety to get to London; would the S.W. breeze (fair wind) last? Should we have to beat up Channel against a head wind? In looking back now, how short the voyage seemed! nobody thought of past troubles, still less of those to come. Who would believe, said Baker, that it is a year ago since we were taking in ballast at Sydney for Newcastle? Thursday a dense fog enveloped us, and to our intense sorrow we were compelled to shorten sail, creeping along at barely five knots. The foghorn was kept continually going, and soundings taken every two hours. The captain and chief mate differing in their calculations as to the

position of the ship, she was hove-to during the night. About 10 A.M. Friday, the atmosphere cleared, revealing to our expectant gaze the well-known cliffs of Beachy Head. Finding ourselves too close inshore, we put the ship about, and stood off on the other tack to clear some dangerous shoals. At three o'clock we kept on our course again, and under square yards bore up Channel, arriving off Dover between four and five o'clock, when we hove-to and took a pilot aboard. "Square away your mainyard!" shouted the captain. "Loose the fore and mizzen top-gallant sails!" sang out our pilot; and under this additional canvas, besides staysails, we tore along at nearly twelve knots an hour. "The London girls have got hold of the tow-rope now," was the general remark, as we dashed through the water, every inch of canvas drawing, the white cliffs of Albion to our left, the distant shores of France on our right—their respective distances appearing curiously deceptive after the unlimited wastes of the ocean. The lighthouses being just lighted, enlivened the scene with their bright rays; some red, some white, some both—now a red glare, then a white,

flashing and vanishing in the dusky evening like monster fire-flies.

We were highly amused with the tug-boats that now and again darted out to us from some snug little nook on the coast, to offer their services. "Take yer up for £40," roars out to our captain a stumpy little man, with bushy red whiskers, equally out of breath with his craft, its snorting and puffing being absolutely painful to us. But having a fair wind up to Margate, our captain prefers engaging a tug there at a cheaper rate, which fact he very plainly makes known to our eager friend of tugging propensity. Failing to strike a bargain and to keep pace with our ship, he turns his boat's nose landwards, and gradually disappears out of sight.

Arrived off Margate towards seven o'clock, and let go top-gallant and topsail halyards fore and aft, hauled up mainsail and foresail, hauled down jibs and staysails, and let go the anchor, which sank with an eagerness that spoke volumes for its affection for its country's mud. The old town nestling on the distant cliffs, with which it blended in the dim grey evening,

appeared to welcome us home. Glad as we were to be so far, we had fully anticipated proceeding straight up the Thames that night; however, the pilot foretold a rough night, which proved true. One after the other the sails were furled, with perhaps a little extra care, being the final stow; ropes on deck were coiled down, things put square, and all hands went to tea at eight o'clock. Nobody made much of a meal; we were too near home to think of eating—we were like schoolboys about to break up for the holidays. Chests were being busily packed with such remnants as the boisterous Atlantic had been pleased to leave us, and cleats and grommets strongly nailed on for carrying ashore. Most of the men were going to boarding-houses where they had been before; only two had the intention of putting up at the Sailors' Home—Jack Anderson and Andrew Edgren, both Swedes.

The Sailors' Home, whether it be in London or Liverpool, Melbourne or Calcutta, is not in special favour with the majority of seamen. They do not consider it a home; nor can this be wondered at when one takes into account

the stringent rules by which they must abide during their sojourn under its roof. The merchant sailor, who has more than the ordinary hatred for discipline, has more than enough of it at sea, where his own safety alone demands compliance. But when he quits his ship, and, as he styles it, becomes his own master, he likes to carry on as he chooses. In the monotonous tropics, or in the stormy seas, he consoles himself by thinking of the easy times he will indulge in when the ship gets home again. Having all night in, he will get up when he likes, go to bed ditto, take his meals when he pleases, and select his own dishes, and won't put his hand to a thing. That is the tar's *beau ideal* of happiness. However, the Sailors' Home authorities insist on regular hours, which, although good in principle, do not fall in with Jack's views. Indeed some, unknowingly, are quite as systematic in their boarding-house life as at the "home;" but the difference between liberty and compulsion is vast.

After tea, anchor-watch was set, mine falling from 2 to 3 A.M. The wind, which had been steadily increasing, now whistled spitefully

through the rigging, and dashed the waves on deck unchecked by our shattered bulwarks. We shut both doors, and turned in at 9 P.M., thankful to be at anchor. True, being all three below together, I had nothing but my chest to lie on, but that was of small consequence, tired out as I was; in fact, as sailors say, I doubted not but I could have slept with my head in a bucket of water. Being called at 2 A.M. by the man on watch to relieve him, I hastened into the galley, where I found a comfortable fire and some hot coffee, sweetened. Sitting looking at the flames, and listening to the howl of the wind outside, the time did not at all hang heavily on me. The whole voyage passed through my mind in one long panorama—the succession of gales down Channel; our stay in Portland; the romance of the tropical nights; my queer first impressions of the sea; our arrival in Sydney—the wonderful scenery; uninteresting Newcastle; the calm Pacific; Hong-Kong, Foo-chow, Shanghai, all calling to mind strange sights, now magnified by distance; the untimely end of Captain F——, and the incidents connected with his burial; sailing

down the China Sea, Banca, Sumatra, Java; our drifting ashore in those wild regions; the Indian Ocean; the loss of Johnson; romantic St Helena; our arrival in New York; and, as a wind up, the horrors of the North Atlantic.

On the following morning—Saturday, 4th April—the wind calmed down, the blue sky appeared, followed by the sun, and all hands were in the height of spirits, even to the two Chinaman stewards—"duffers" at everything else but cunning and making pastry. A tug was engaged; and by eleven o'clock—the anchor being weighed, the hawser made fast, and the yards braced sharp up to the wind—we proceeded on our last journey, the final stage of the voyage, to the West India Docks. With wind and tide against us, we wended our way but slowly, and it was 7 P.M. when we got abreast of Sheerness. Nothing much was doing now. The captain and pilot walked the poop together, occasionally laughing at some good joke; the chief and second mates were leaning over the port bulwarks; while the rest of us were either in the galley or on the forecastle-head, awaiting orders.

Arrived at Gravesend at eleven o'clock, the tug slackening speed to enable the Customs officers to climb aboard. The moon struggling with the clouds lit up the scene at intervals, and helped us to see our way. The Downs pilot now left us, the river or "mud" pilot taking his place. We then set to rigging in the jib-boom, which kept us employed till off Woolwich, where it became necessary to shorten the drift of the hawser. We reached the West India Dock gates by 1.30 A.M., and commenced slowly hauling into dock, where we finished mooring to a buoy at three o'clock, all hands then going to rest, the captain giving strict orders that no one should go ashore till morning. But, impatient to get my liberty, I washed and dressed there and then, and by four o'clock was over the ship's side, out of the dock-gates, and on my way to town. But after walking two miles, my boots began to hurt me (they had been soaking in salt water for an indefinite period); and being unable to ride, as I had only half a rupee in my pocket, which nobody would change, I was compelled to retrace my steps. Fortunately only the cook was up when I re-

turned aboard, although it was eight o'clock; so putting on my dirty clothes again, I abided my time. The "runners" soon afterwards came aboard; one or two had their horse and cart on the quay ready to carry off Jack and all his gear. In another two hours not a sailor remained aboard the ship. Bidding good-bye to the weather-beaten Sea Queen, I proceeded by rail to Fenchurch Street station to report myself to the owners and ask permission to go home, which was duly granted.

On the 24th August my sea indentures were cancelled, and on the same day I obtained an official discharge from the Registrar of Seamen.

EXPLANATION OF SEA TERMS.

Aback.—The situation of the sails when the wind presses them against the masts, forcing the ship astern.

Abaft.—Towards the stern.

About.—Tacking ship.

A-cock-bill.—The situation of the yards when topped up perpendicularly.

A-lee.—Putting the helm in the opposite direction to that in which the wind blows.

All aback.—The situation of a vessel with the wind suddenly blowing on the fore side of the sails.

All in the wind.—When all the sails are shaking.

Avast (*'vast*).—An order to stop, as "avast hauling!"

Backstays.—Stays running from a mast-head to the ship's side, slanting aft.

Ballast.—Weight taken aboard to keep a vessel upright or steady; usually sand, iron, or stone.

Bar (*capstan-bar*).—Heavy pieces of wood by which the capstan is hove round.

Baré poles.—No sails set.

Barnacle.—A shell-fish much found on ship's bottoms.

Bark.—A three-masted vessel: fore and main masts ship-rigged; her mizzen like a schooner's main-mast, carrying a spanker and gaff topsail.

Battens.—Pieces of wood put round a hatch to keep tarpaulin down. Also, strips of wood nailed under chests to keep them off the damp deck.

Beam-ends.—Laying over on one side.

Bear down.—Approaching.

Bear a hand.—Make haste.

Beating.—Tacking against the wind.

Becket.—A handle or loop made with the strand of a rope. A piece of rope for confining another rope or a spar.

Belay.—To make fast a rope round a pin without hitching.

Bend.—To attach. Bending a sail—making it fast to the yard.

Bight.—Folding a rope over in the form of a loop; in contradistinction from the ends.

Bilge.—That part of a ship which would rest on the ground if ashore upright. Bilge-water—water which settles in the bilge.

Binnacle.—A box or case near the helm, containing the compass to steer by.

Bitts.—Pieces of wood or iron to which ropes and cables are fastened.

Block.—Wooden case containing sheaves on which tackles reeve.

Bluff-bowed.—A vessel with a heavy square bow.

Board.—The stretch a ship makes on one tack when beating. By the board—said of masts when they fall over the side.

Boat-hook.—A staff with an iron hook to hold a boat fast with. Chain-hook—long iron hooks for dragging chain-cables along deck.

Boatswain (*bos'n*).—Petty officer having charge of the rigging, &c.; generally remains on deck all day and turns in all night.

Bobstays.—Used to stay the bowsprit down to the stem.

Boltrope.—The rope which is sewn round the edge of a sail.

Boom.—A spar.

Bow.—The rounded part of a vessel forward.

Bower.—An anchor.

Bowline (*bo-lin*).—A rope employed for holding the leach out when a ship is close-hauled; now seldom used.

Bowse.—To pull on a tackle.

Bowsprit.—A stout spar standing out from the bows.

Box-hauling.—Wearing by backing the head yards; swinging the yards to a shifting wind.

Brace.—A rope for hauling a yard round.

Breaker.—A small water-cask.

Brig.—A square-rigged vessel with two masts. A hermaphrodite brig has a brig's fore-mast and a schooner's main-mast.

Broach-to.—Falling off, so as to bring the wind on the other quarter, and take the sails aback.

Bulk.—Stowed in bulk. Goods stowed loose; not in casks or bags.

Bulkhead.—A partition separating different parts of a vessel.

Bulwarks.—Woodwork round the decks.

Bumboats.—Boats for supplying crews with provisions, &c., in port.

Buntline (*buntlin*).—Thin woollen stuff of which a ship's colours are made.

Buntlines.—Ropes for hauling up the body of a sail.

Cabin.—After-part of a vessel in which the officers live.

Cable.—A strong heavy chain secured to the anchor; usually 120 fathoms in length.

Capstan.—A machine on deck for a strong purchase in heaving. Men-o'-war weigh their anchors by a capstan; merchant vessels by a windlass.

Cat-head.—Large timbers projecting from the ship's side, to which the anchor is raised and secured.

Cat's-paw.—A light current of air seen on the water during a calm.

Chafe.—Wear and tear by friction. Chafing-gear—small stuff used to protect the rigging from chafing.

Channels.—Broad pieces of plank bolted edgewise to the outside of a vessel for spreading the rigging; now seldom used.

Cheerly!—Sharply; with a will.

Chock.—Wedge to secure anything with. Chock-a-block—when the two blocks of a tackle are run close up together.

Cleat.—A piece of wood to belay ropes to.

Clew.—Lower corner of a sail.

Clew-line.—A rope that hauls up the clew. Clew-garnet—the clew-line of a course.

Close-hauled.—Sailing near the point from which the wind is blowing. Also termed, on a taut bowline; full and by; on the wind.

Club-hauling.—Bringing a ship's head round on the other tack, by letting go the anchor, and slipping the cable.

Coamings.—Framework round the hatches, to prevent water going down the hold.

Companion.—Wooden covering over the steps to a cabin.

Conning.—Directing the helmsman.

Course.—The sails of the lower yard.

Crank.—Inclined to lay over before the breeze, owing to construction or bad stowage.

Cross-jack (cro-jack).—The mizzen yards.

Cuddy.—Cabin of a ship.

Davits.—Iron bars to which the boats are suspended.

Dead reckoning.—Calculating a ship's position by distance run and course made.

Dog-vane.—A small pennant fixed in the truck to show the direction of the wind.

Downhaul.—Rope for hauling down jibs and staysails.

Fathom.—Six feet.

Fore and aft.—Lengthwise with the ship; contrary to athwartships.

Forecastle (*fok'sle*).—The fore-part of the vessel where the sailors live.

Fox.—Twisting several yarns together for "serving," &c.

Gaff.—A spar to which is bent the head of a fore-and-aft sail.

Galley.—The cooking-place.

Gaskets.—Pieces of sennit or line for securing the sails to the yards.

Grating.—Open lattice-work of wood.

Gunwale (*gunnel*).—Upper rail of a boat or ship.

Guy.—Rope to prevent anything swaying from one side to the other.

Halyards.—Rope for hoisting yards and sails.

Hammock.—Canvas bedding slung for sailors to sleep in; now only used in men-o'-war. Merchant-ships are provided with bunks.

Handsomely!—Gently, carefully.

Handspike.—A wooden bar for heaving at the windlass.

Harness-casks.—Brass-bound casks on the quarter-deck, wherein is kept the salt pork and beef.

Hawser.—A large rope used for mooring, warping, &c.

Heave-to.—Laying-to.

Helm.—Steering apparatus.

Holystone.—Stone employed for rubbing the decks with.

Jib-boom.—Boom beyond the bowsprit.

Junk.—Old rope. Name given by sailors to the salt meat they eat.
Jury-mast.—A temporary mast.

Kedge.—A small anchor for warping.
Kentledge.—Pig-iron ballast.
Kink.—Twist in a rope.
Knight-heads.—Timbers next the stem on each side.
Knot.—A division on the log-line, answering to a mile.

Leach.—Sides of a sail.
Leading wind.—A fair wind for two opposite directions.
Lee.—The reverse side to that on which the wind blows.
Leeway.—What a vessel loses by drifting.
Lie-to.—Weathering a gale by keeping the ship's head to the sea and wind, and making no headway.
Life-lines.—Ropes stretched along any part of a vessel for men to hold on to.
List.—Inclination of a vessel to one side.
Long-boat.—The largest boat in a merchant-vessel. Usually carried between the fore and main masts.
Lubber's hole.—An opening in the top, next the mast.
Luff.—Bringing the ship to the wind.

Marlinspike.—An iron pin, sharpened at one end for splicing and knotting.
Moon-sail.—Light sail above the skysail; seldom carried.

Pay-off.—When a vessel's head falls off from the wind.
Poop.—Deck over the after-end of a spar-deck.
Port (formerly called *larboard*).—Left side of a ship, looking towards the bow. Port the helm, is to put it to starboard.

Quarter.—The part of the vessel's side between the after-part of the main chains and the stern.

Quarter-deck.—That part of the deck abaft the mainmast.

Quarter-master.—A petty officer who superintends or carries on the steering.

Ratlines.—Lines running across the shrouds horizontally to step upon.

Reef.—Reducing a sail by taking in upon its head if a square sail, and its foot if a fore-and-aft sail.

Royal.—Sail above the top-gallant-sail.

Sag.—Drifting off bodily to leeward.

Save-all.—A small sail sometimes set under the foot of a lower studding-sail; seldom used.

Schooner.—Small vessel with two masts and no tops. A fore-and-aft schooner has only fore-and-aft sails. A topsail schooner carries a square foresail, and sometimes a top-gallant-sail and royal.

Scotchman.—A large batten placed on rigging to save from chafing.

Scuppers.—Holes in the waterways for the water to run off the deck.

Scuttle.—Small hatchway.

Scuttle-butt.—A cask on deck filled with water for daily use. "Three turns round the long-boat, and a pull at the scuttle-butt," said of a seaman who pretends being very busy without doing any work.

Sennit.—Braid made by plaiting rope-yarns or spun-yarns together.

Sheet.—Rope holding the clew down.

Sheet-anchor.—Ship's largest anchor; not carried at the bow.

Ship.—Vessel with three complete masts.

Shrouds.—Ropes stretching from the ship's side to the mast-heads to support the masts.

Skids.—Pieces of timber supported over the deck to rest boats on ; usually over the quarter-deck.

Skysail.—Light sail above the royal.

Sloop.—Small vessel with one mast.

Slew.—To turn over or round.

So !—Order to 'vast hauling.

Spanker.—After fore-and-aft sail of a ship or bark.

Splice.—Joining two ropes together by interweaving the strands.

Starboard.—Right side of a vessel looking towards the bow.

Stay.—Tacking a vessel.

Stays.—Ropes supporting the masts fore and aft.

Staysail.—Sail set on a stay.

Stern-sheets.—After-part of a boat.

Stiff.—A vessel that stands upright before a breeze.

Studding-sail (stunsail).—Light sails carried outside the square sails in fair weather.

Swab.—Mops formed of rope-yarns for drying a deck.

Swig.—Hauling on the bight of a rope with the end fast.

Tack.—To put a ship about and bring the wind on the other side.

Tackle (tay-cle).—A purchase formed by blocks.

Taffrail (tafferel).—Rail round a ship's stern.

Tell-tale.—Compass in the cabin to enable the captain to tell the ship's course without going on deck. Also, a little instrument marking the position of the tiller.

Top.—Platform overhead of lower mast, resting on the trestle-trees to spread the rigging, and for the convenience of men aloft.

Topmast.—Mast above the lower mast.

Top-gallant-mast.—Mast above the topmast.

Topsail.—Second sail above the deck.

Top-gallant-sail.—Sail above the topsail.

Trick.—Length of a man's duty at the "wheel."

Truck.—A round piece of wood fitted on the top of the mast, having small sheave-holes for signal halyards.

Vang.—Rope for steadying a gaff.

Warp.—Moving a ship from one place to another by a rope made fast to some fixed object.

Wear.—To turn a vessel round on the other tack by filling away and squaring in the yards and carrying her stern round by the wind. The opposite of tacking.

Windlass.—A machine used to weigh anchor by.

Yaw.—Said of a vessel keeping an unsteady course.

ERRATA.

P. 124, line 9 from top, *for* "three hundred" *read* hundred and fifty."

P. 159, line 13 from top, *for* "300" *read* "400."

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